THE

INDEPENDENT WHIG:

OR, A

DEFENCE

OF

Primitive Chriſtianity,

And of Our

Eccleſiaſtical Eſtabliſhment,

AGAINST

The Exorbitant CLAIMS and ENCROACHMENTS of Fanatical and Diſaffected CLERGYMEN.

The SEVENTH EDITION.
With ADDITIONS and AMENDMENTS.

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THE INDEPENDENT WHIG.

NUMBER XXXIII.

Wedneſday, Auguſt 31. 1720.

The Ignorance *of the* High-Church Vulgar, *and its Cauſes.*

I HAVE always thought the beſt conſtituted Church in the World to be that, which forms and produces the moſt religious and moſt rational Members. Churches are Places where Men are, or ſhould be, taught the Love of God, and of Virtue; and when People have been long uſed to perform divine Diſcipline,

and, as they imagine, receive Inſtruction in Moral and Evangelical Duties, in theſe ſtately Fabrics, they generally conceive a deep Reverence and Devotion for the Buildings themſelves, and for every thing that is ſaid in them, as well as a great Opinion of the Wiſdom and Sanctity of the Teachers, who preſide there, and dictate *ex Cathedra*: They eſteem them as Perſons ſent by God himſelf, to deliver a Meſſage from his own Mouth; for which alſo they have often the Word of the Preacher---No ſmall Reaſon to *the Many* for the believing of it!

SO that here is an unaccountable Prepoſſeſſion in favour of every Doctrine, or every Dream, which corrupt Prieſts ſhall think fit to deliver. And indeed, the High-Church Clergy have never failed to make their Advantage of this ſuperſtitious Awe and Credulity of their Hearers; and to ſanctify every Falſhood, and every Whimſy and Impiety uttered by them, with a miſapplied or perverted Text of Scripture; and ſo proſtituted and profaned the high and holy Name of God, to patronize their Impoſtures. I ſhall give ſome Inſtances.

WHEN they have had a mind to flatter a cruel or a fooliſh Prince, in order to make him ſerve their Purpoſes, and do their Drudgery: they have inſtantly intituled him *God's Vicegerent*,

gerent, tho' he acted at the same aime by the Instigation of his Lust, or of *Satan*. And, because *David* and *Saul*, being appointed by God himself, by Word of Mouth, were called the *Lor'ds Anointed*, therefore every Tyrant, who was not appointed by God himself, but seized a Crown by Violence or Surprize, became also the Lord's Anointed. And because *Adam* was the Father of his own Son, therefore he was the King of his own Son; and therefore all such Kings, who had not *Adam* for their Father, were nevertheless, in Right of *Adam*, Kings and Fathers of their Subjects, who yet were not their Children, but for all that owed them the Duty of Children, whilst they were plundering and ruining them; and all the Rapine and Murders which they were prompted to commit, by their Anger or their Avarice, were called the *Ordinance of God*, and were to be submitted to with *Christian Stupidity*, on Pain of Damnation; that is, it was made Damnation to resist Actions and Cruelties which deserved Damnation. And as you were to submit to Law, and Justice, on Pain of Damnation, so ought you to submit to the overturning of all Law, and all Justice, on Pain of Damnation also. And, because, when we have any Matter of Complaint, we are bid to acquaint the

Church with it; therefore the People, who are the Church, are, in every Caſe, to be determined by the Parſon of the Pariſh, who is not the Church. And, becauſe we are to confeſs our Sins one to another; therefore we are to do it to a Prieſt, which is not doing it to one another. And, becauſe *Abraham* gave the Tenth of his Plunder to *Melchiſedek*, who was not a Prieſt of our Church by Law Eſtabliſhed; therefore our Eſtabliſhed Prieſts, who have nothing to do with *Melchiſedek*, nor know any thing of him, have a Divine Right to the Tenth-part of every Man's Eſtate and Induſtry. And, as the Tribe of *Levi* had a Right to Tythes, though they and their Tythes are long ſince aboliſhed; ſo ought our Parſons to have the ſame Tythes by the Goſpel, without being in the leaſt a kin to *Aaron*'s Perſon, or Heirs to his Eſtate, or Succeſſors to his Inſtitution. And, though our Saviour's Kingdom is not of this World; yet the Kingdom of the High Clergy, who, if you will take their Words for it, are his Repreſentatives, is, and ought to be, of this World. And, becauſe the reprobate and gluttonous Monks had, by endleſs Rogueries, and diabolical Lyes, plunder'd the deluded Laity of their Poſſeſſions, and engroſſed to themſelves moſt of the Lands of *England*; therefore

fore our Modern High Prieſts have a *natural* and *hereditary* Right to enjoy the ſame: And though they have, upon Oath, renounced all Power, and all Pretence to Power, but what the Law vouchſafes to grant them; yet they have a Power independent on the Law, and Principles independent on theſe very Oaths, though renounced by theſe very Oaths.

ALL theſe, and many more Abſurdities, equally vile and impudent, have been blaſphemouſly fathered upon Scripture, and the Author of Scripture; though they all contradict the Scripture, as well as they do common Senſe, and common Honeſty, But as the Vulgar do always take that to be the higheſt Point of Religion, about which their Teachers make the moſt Noiſe, for the Time being, whether it be Tythe, or Dr. *Sacheverel*, or the *Pretender*, or the late Duke of *Ormond*, or King *Charles the Firſt*; ſo vicious and corrupt Clergymen, on their part, have always tacked the Name of God, or, which is much more powerful with the Mob, the Name of the *Church*, to any Aſſertion, or any Claim, or any Invention of theirs, be it ever ſo monſtrous, or miſchievous; and inſtantly it becomes, with weak People, an Article of Faith, upon which Salvation itſelf depends. For, as it is their firſt Care to force

a Teſtimony from Heaven for every Whim or Forgery of theirs; ſo their next Concern is to make every Contradiction and Oppoſition to it damnable.

HENCE it comes to paſs, that the ſame Virtues are not of the ſame Importance at all Times; but Virtues are made Vices, and Vice is made Virtue, juſt as the preſent Temper, or the preſent Views prevail; and, by corrupt Prieſts, Things are often taught under the Name of Chriſtianity, which are oppoſite to the Nature of Chriſtianity: Religion is pretended, and Power meant. In conſequence of this, Duty is converted into Sin, and Sin into Duty. Thus, the worſhipping of God according to one's Conſcience, without which there can be no Worſhip, is made by the High-Church Prieſts a damnable Sin; and the not worſhipping a Table in the Chancel, though in Oppoſition to one's Conſcience, is as bad. Sometimes the *reſiſting of unlawful Power*, is certain Damnation; and ſometimes the *not rebelling* againſt the moſt lawful Power, has the ſame terrible Penalty annexed to it. To doubt or deny their uncharitable, unintelligible Explications of Myſtery, which cannot be explained, is the moſt heinous Atheiſm; and to whip a ſeditious, forſworn Prieſt, is crying Infidelity, and

and a Wound to Chriſt, through the Sides of his Embaſſador.

AT one Time, *Predeſtination* is of high Conſequence, and *made* an *Article of* Faith, and all *Free-willers* ſhould be baniſhed the Land, or locked up in Dungeons, like wild Beaſts; which was the Judgment of the Biſhops in King *James* the Firſt's Days, concerning the *Arminians*. At a different Seaſon, when Preferments run high on the other Side, as in King *Charles* the Firſt's Reign, and ever ſince; *Arminianiſm* not only recovers Credit, but grows modiſh, and conſequently *Orthodox*; while *Predeſtination* becomes an old-faſhion'd Piece of Faith, and a ſure Sign of *Fanaticiſm*: And yet it continues one of the XXXIX. Articles, and yet it muſt not be believed, and yet it muſt be ſigned and aſſented to with a ſincere Aſſent.

IN all theſe Marches and Counter-marches, the Paſſions of too many of the People keep pace with thoſe of the High Prieſts; and they are conſtantly diſpoſed to be Slaves or Rebels, Free-willers, or No-willers, Believers of this, or Believers of that, juſt as Almighty High-Church commands them.

SUCH Men do not pretend to teach their People the Meekneſs of Chriſtianity:— No, their Zeal is to be Anger, and their Religion

Cruelty. That Fierceneſs, which is inconſiſtent with the Spirit of a Chriſtian, is to be the certain Criterion of one whom they call a *true Churchman*; and that Mercy, which is inſeparable from the Goſpel, is inconſiſtent with the Temper of High-Church. Their Votaries are not taught to be *Chriſtians*, which would ſpoil the Project, but *High-Churchmen*; and inſtead of an Army of Martyrs, they are to be an Army of Martyr-makers. Nor is any Portion of Knowledge fit for them; for that might endanger the Loſs of their Vaſſalage; and the teaching them to know for themſelves, might extinguiſh their Zeal, and intirely change their Belief and Behaviour. The poor People are, in ſhort, by ſuch Guides taught to be ignorant, and to let others know for them: They muſt give up common Senſe to learn their Duty; and abandon Chriſtianity, without which they cannot have the Grace of God, to embrace rigid Conformity, which is neither a Sign, nor a Cauſe, of that Grace, but often a Bar and a Contradiction to it. This is ſo true, that whoever can reconcile *Human Authority to Chriſtian Charity*, may reconcile Water and Fire, or do any other Impoſſibility.

TENDERNESS and Moderation to thoſe who devoutly differ from us, though they are evident

evident Principles and Duties of Chriſtianity, and even the Reſult of Reaſon, Juſtice, and Humanity, yet are never mentioned by the Mouth of Orthodoxy, but as Terms of Contempt or Reproach: Inſomuch that a pious Indulgence to Men of a different Communion, the moſt honeſt, virtuous, inoffenſive Men; and an Indulgence for the invincible, and perhaps rational Perſuaſions of the Mind, is the common Topic of Satire, and either ridiculed or reviled; whilſt Men of the ſame Side may go what Lengths they will in Violence and Villainy, without Anger or Rebuke: And while one Man ſhall have his Houſe burned, his Brains beat out, and his Family ruined, for having a ſcrupulous Conſcience, which is much more offenſive than none at all; another Man ſhall break all the Ten Commandments with Reputation.

HATRED, and Bitterneſs of Spirit, are the firſt Leſſons which the unhappy People are taught by ſuch Men; and the Goſpel muſt be laid aſide, and Good-nature be extinguiſhed, before modern Orthodoxy can be ſwallowed, or modern Zeal infuſed. Some of them may probably have learned to repeat the *Catechiſm* by Rote, and even to have practiſed profound Reſpect and Submiſſion to their *Spiritual Superiors*; but for the great and indiſpenſable Du-

ties of Religion, how can it be expected, that they ſhould mind them, while they daily ſee their Teachers expreſs a much more warm Concern for their own Dignities and Revenues, than for the Honour and Intereſt of pure unmixed Religion, which was ever higheſt when Eccleſiaſtical Power, and Eccleſiaſtical Exciſe, were loweſt?

WHEN a Congregation ſees the Doctor much warmer againſt Diſſenters, than againſt Sin, and not half ſo zealous for the abſolute Neceſſity of a virtuous and ſober Life, as for the abſolute Neceſſity of a rigid Conformity; what can they conclude, but either that he derides them, or that a ſtupid Compliance with him, and a raging Reſentment againſt Nonconformiſts, are the great Duties of Churchmen? Add to this, that if his Life be vicious, ſuch a Concluſion is ſtill the more natural to vulgar Underſtandings. When they ſee Church-Power ſo violently contented for, and Goſpel-Holineſs ſo little regarded, or ſo eaſily diſpenſed with; what can their ſtupid Underſtandings infer, but that a blind Submiſſion to the Eccleſiaſtics is beyond all evangelical Grace, and every moral Virtue? They find by daily Experience, that they may commit Drunkenneſs or Whoredom with Impunity, or at ſmall Expence; but if they do not give the Doctor what

what he calls his Due, even to the laſt Sheaf of Corn, or the laſt Pound of Wool, they are expoſed in the Pulpit, haraſſed in the Biſhops-Court, and probably, at laſt, ſurrendered to *Satan* and Damnation.

BESIDES, they oftener hear Texts quoted, in ſome Pulpits, to abuſe Separatiſts, than to recommend Godlineſs and Virtue; and ſee the Mode of performing a Duty more vehemently urged, than the Duty itſelf: Thus Kneeling at the Lord's Supper is made by many of equal Importance with the Sacrament itſelf; and the Croſs in Baptiſm muſt no more be parted with, than the Ordinance of Baptiſm.

IT is therefore no Wonder, that the Affections and Antipathies of the common People have neither proper Cauſes, nor proper Objects; and that they neither love the Goſpel as ſuch, nor hate Sin as ſuch; but form their Faith and Devotion upon the Word and Behaviour of their Prieſts, who have the keeping of their Religion, their Zeal, and their Paſſions. And what hopeful Uſe they make of this terrible Dominion, we all know: For indeed the Chriſtian Religion is not ſo much as known to the High-Church Vulgar, nor ſuffer'd to be known; and as little do they feel, or are ſuffered to feel, the tender Impulſes of Good-nature and Humanity; but poſſeſs an Implacableneſs of Spirit,

rit, as oppoſite to the Spirit of *Chriſt*, as was the Spirit of *Mahomet* to that of *Moſes*.

G.

NUMBER XXXIV.

Wedneſday, September 7. 1720.

Of FASTING. *Part* 2.

IN my 27th Paper, I have made a Diſſertation upon *Faſting*: In this I ſhall continue it.

MONSIEUR *de Fontenelle*, in his *Hiſtory of Oracles*, tells us, from *Philoſtratus*, that the Oracle of *Amphiaraus* in *Attica* delivered its Anſwers in Dreams; and that thoſe who conſulted it, muſt firſt faſt well in order to dream well: But when Faſting failed to produce a Frenſy of Brain, and by it the Meaning of the God, who had no other way of aſcending into the Head, but upon the Fumes ariſing from empty Bowels; then the Prieſt

Prieſt helped his Maſter to bring forth a Dream, by wrapping up the devout Queriſt in the Skins of Victims, which being rubbed and impregnated with intoxicating Drugs, diſpoſed him to dream moſt divinely, and filled his Noddle with very hopeful Prophecy. This ſatisfied the believing Queriſt, ſaved the Credit of the God, and brought pretty Offerings to his *Vicar*.

SUCH Uſe did the *Pagan* Prieſts make of the Duty of Faſting; and that the *Romiſh* Prieſts have perverted it to as wicked and deceitful Purpoſes, I have ſhewn in another Paper. It is agreeable to their Cunning, and their Avarice, to make the People poor and mad; and it muſt be owned a pretty prieſtly Art, that of driving Men out of their Eſtates, and their Underſtandings, with their own Conſent; and leading them into a Belief, that Starving is a Duty, and Lunacy is Grace.

BY the Law of Nature, we are not obliged to faſt at all, unleſs in the way of Phyſic, when we are ill, through an Over-fulneſs of the Veſſels, or any other Diſorder, which may be removed or leſſened by Abſtinence. In this Caſe, we ought to faſt for our Health-ſake; and whatever is neceſſary for Self-relief, or Self-preſervation, becomes alſo a Duty, and a Piece of Natural Religion, when it does not con-

contradict a poſitive Law of God. But to abſtain, upon certain Days, from the comfortable Uſe of God's good Creatures, which ought to be received with Thankfulneſs, out of a vain Pretence to pleaſe him, or to promote our own Salvation, is a ſtrange and barbarous Chimera, which the Law of Nature abhors; and can be the Effect of nothing but Diſtraction in the People, or Craft in the Prieſts. We might as rationally imagine, that going naked at certain ſevere Seaſons of the Year, would draw us nearer Heaven; and that the afflicting our Skins with Froſt and Snow would do great Service to our ſhivering Souls; and that though Self-preſervation be an eſſential Law of Nature, yet Self-deſtruction is alſo an eſſential Law of Nature.

FASTING, therefore, being no Part of the Law of Nature, the *Jewiſh* Law of Ceremonies, which is aboliſhed, cannot make it a Duty: And for the Examples of Faſting, taken from the Prophet *Daniel*, and other holy Men of the *Old Teſtament*; they were either voluntary, ſuch as any one may perform when he is in a faſting Humour, which nobody pretends to reſtrain; or they were the Effect of Sorrow, when Grief had deſtroyed Appetite, and then there was no Devotion in them; or they were extraordinary and ſupernatural, and being,

being inimitable, cannot be neceſſary. Miraculous Faſting cannot be a Duty, where the Gift of Miracles is not given.

As to the *New Teſtament*, there is not a ſtated Faſt appointed in it: We are indeed commanded to faſt and pray; but we are no-where told how much, or how often, we are to do either; but are left to chuſe proper Occaſions, and proper Inclinations, for doing both. St. *Paul* is ſuch a generous Advocate for Liberty of this Kind, that he condemns all thoſe who condemn others for taking it: *Let not*, ſays he, *him that eateth, deſpiſe him that eateth not: And let not him which eateth not, judge him that eateth; for God hath received him. One Man eſteemeth one Day above another: Another eſteemeth every Day alike. Let every Man be fully perſuaded in his own Mind* (Rom. ch. xiv. ver. 3, and 5.). The ſame Spirit of Charity, and the ſame good-natured rational Advice, runs through the whole Chapter.

THE Inſtitution of *Lent* was founded upon our Saviour's Faſt of Forty Days in the Wilderneſs; as if weak impotent Mortals could imitate the Omnipotent Son of God, in Works done by Divine Power only! They might as well pretend to walk upon the Sea once a Year,

or

or to raiſe the Dead at all times: Beſides, our Saviour performed this Faſt but once, and his Apoſtles never, as far as we know. *Once a Twelve-month you muſt keep Lent*, is not a Goſpel Precept.

NO Society, therefore, of Men can injoin any Time, or Meaſure, of Faſting (except where the Law directs the ſame) without departing from the Goſpel, contradicting St. *Paul*, and ſetting up their own Authority in Defiance of both the Goſpel and the Saint. Such an Injunction would be impracticable, and even cruel. To many Conſtitutions it might be dangerous, and even fatal; and to all Men it would render Life wretched and burdenſome. The good God has no-where commanded frail Men to worſhip him with Pain and Sickneſs of Body, nor to haſten their own Death by the Means of their Devotion. This would be to repreſent him as delighting in human Miſery, and human Sacrifices; a ſort of Worſhip ſuitable to the terrible Spirit of *Moloch*, or any other *Demon*, but no-wiſe acceptable to the God of Mercy, and *the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*.

THE Popiſh Prieſts know well, that it is intirely impoſſible, that all Men ſhould comply with this their Diſcipline of Hunger; and perhaps

haps that very Impoſſibility is their beſt Reaſon for maintaining it. It is certain, that from hence they draw vaſt Gain, by hiring out Diſpenſations for Eating on the Days of Faſting; and the Lucre which they make by breaking the Canon, is an unanſwerable Argument for defending it. No Man is denied the Privilege of breaking *Lent*, who can pay for breaking it. He who cannot faſt at all, may, for a competent Fee, eat Fiſh, which is a more luxurious Diet than Fleſh; and he who cannot faſt upon Fiſh, may, for a more competent Fee, faſt upon a Belly-full of Roaſt-beef; which, tho' a chaſter ſort of Food than Fiſh, is more ſtrictly forbidden by that Church.

INDEED, ſuch are the vaſt Fees ariſing to the Popiſh Church, from Licences for a Liberty to eat, when it is a Duty to faſt, that the whole Inſtitution of Faſting *there*, ſeems only a religious Roguery, deſign'd for ſtarving the People, to feed the Prieſts. For myſelf, I think the Parſon has ſo little to do with this Matter, that I do not think, that any Direction ought to be taken about Faſting, but from our Conſtitution, or our Phyſician. If it be our Duty to faſt on certain Days, no Tribe of Prieſts can diſpenſe with the Pleaſure and the Laws of Almighty God; though it is a Task

Task which (for Money) they never refuſe: And if it be not our Duty, it is inſolent and wicked in them to command what neither God nor Nature requires; and it is in us a Sin and a Folly to obey them. Even the Proteſtant Prieſts, long ſince the *Reformation*, have known how to make the right Uſe of this Power. I myſelf have ſeen ſeveral formal Diſpenſations, ſigned by Archbiſhop *Sheldon*, under the Archiepiſcopal Seal, to licenſe the eating of Fleſh in *Lent*; which Diſpenſations, I preſume, were not granted without Application and Fees.

RELIGION is a voluntary Thing; it can no more be forced than Reaſon, or Memory, or any Faculty of the Soul. To be devout againſt our Will, is an Abſurdity; and it is ridiculous in others to hope to make us ſo, in ſpite of ourſelves. We have no Power over the Appetites of others, no more than over their Conſciences. Neither a Man's Mind, nor his Palate, can be ſubject to the Juriſdiction of another; and whoever takes upon him to regulate one's Throat and Stomach, and direct one how much to ſwallow, may (with equa Reaſon) aſſume Dominion over the other Offices of Nature, and dictate how much one ought to diſcharge. If Faſting be good and pious,

pious, becauſe it afflicts and mortifies the Human Spirit and Frame; a Surfeit, or a Debauch, or a Kick on the Guts, or a broken Leg, muſt be good and pious, for the ſame Reaſon, if given or taken with the ſame View.

As Faſting ought to be left to every Man's Diſcretion, becauſe every Man is the beſt Judge of his Conſtitution and his Conſcience, ſo ought it to be exerciſed with exceeding Care and Caution; otherwiſe it will be apt to ſour our Tempers, or diſorder our Heads, and probably do both. Now, neither Ill-nature, nor Enthuſiaſm, is any-wiſe related to true Religion; far otherwiſe, they are the greateſt Enemies which it has. A bitter Spirit, and a raving Brain, may be occaſioned or increaſed by Faſting; but Chriſtianity never produces them, nor owns them. We may faſt ourſelves into Peeviſhneſs, and call it *Chriſtian Zeal*; and into the Vapours, and call the Wind in our Heads, *Inſpiration*. But, by all this, we only ſhew, that we know nothing, at leaſt, poſſeſs nothing, either of *Inſpiration* or *Zeal*.

But the ſame immoderate Faſting does not only render People whimſical and paſſionate, and has conſequently helped to give Birth to many ridiculous and uncharitable Principles

ciples of Divinity, which have infatuated and inflamed Mankind; but it alſo creates narrow Thoughts, and an abject Poorneſs of Spirit; and renders the Mind prone to Deluſion and Slavery. It is manifeſt, that a moderate Uſe of the Bleſſings and Enjoyments of Life, of which Eating and Drinking are not the leaſt, has a wonderful Tendency to create or improve a good and beneficent Diſpoſition of Heart; which, in my Opinion, is as abſolutely neceſſary to Devotion, as to good Neighbourhood. I can never think, that Ill-nature, or Baſeneſs of Mind, can be an acceptable Oblation to the Wiſe and Merciful God; or that Religion ſhould command what common Senſe forbids. I muſt own, I am always beſt pleaſed after a good Meal, and therefore beſt diſpoſed to love God and my Neighbour, which is the Sum of both Tables: I feel, at the ſame Juncture, the Love of Liberty, and the Spirit of *Whiggiſm*, ſtrongeſt in me. And if Eating and Drinking makes us thus bold for our Conſtitution, let us, we beſeech you, in the Name of Public-ſpirit, promote moderate Eating and Drinking.

IT is a Principle in Politics, that a happy People will never bear a tyrannical Prince: He muſt therefore make his Subjects wretched, before he can make himſelf abſolute. And this

this Principle holds equally true, in the Buſineſs of *Church Dominion*. The Laity muſt be Fools, before they can think the Prieſts to be Oracles; and they muſt be Slaves, before they can think the Prieſts to be Lords. Here then is an unanſwerable Reaſon, taken from the ſtanding Rules of Eccleſiaſtical Polity, why the Lay-Beaſts of the People, as Mr. *Leſley* kindly calls us, ſhould be always kept ſenſleſs, always ſtarving. I would therefore intreat all my loving Countrymen, that, as they love their Liberty, and the Proteſtant Religion, they would love their Victuals.

G.

NUMBER XXXV.

Wedneſday, September 14. 1720.

Of REASON.

REASON is the only Guide given to Men in the State of Nature, to find out the Will of God, and the Means of Self-preſervation. The Senſes are its ſubordinate Inſtruments and Spies: They bring it Intelligence; and it forms a Judgment, and takes Meaſures, according to the Diſcoveries which they make. It compares Things one with another, and chuſes them, if they are good; or neglects them, if they are indifferent; or ſhuns them, if they are bad. It diſcovers a Firſt Cauſe, the Maker, Contriver, and Preſerver of all Things; and therefore it teaches Submiſſion to his Will, Admiration of his Wiſdom and Power, and Thankfulneſs for his Goodneſs and Mercy. It diſtinguiſher Subject

Subjects from Slaves; and shews the Loveliness of Liberty, and the Vileness of Vassalage: It shews that, as to political Privileges, all Men are born equal; and consequently, that he who is no better than others, can have no Right to command others, who are as good as himself; unless, for the Ends of their own Interest and Safety, they confer that Right upon him, during *their* good Pleasure, or *his* good Behaviour.

REASON has invented all *Science*, pointed out all Commerce, and framed all Schemes for social Happiness. It has polished Mankind, set the *Greeks* above the *Barbarians*, and the *Romans* above the *Greeks*. It has been observed, in Praise of its great Power and Excellency, by a celebrated Moralist, that *we have not sufficient Strength to follow our Reason as far as it would carry us*.

TO REASON we are beholden for all the Comforts and Conveniencies of Life, next after the first Author of them; and for our Defence against the Assaults of Beasts of Prey, and of one another; and for our Shelter from the Inclemencies of uncertain Weather, freezing us, or scorching us, according to the different Seasons of the Year. The Earth, with all its Abundance, affords but rude and unpleasing Entertainment, without the Dexterity and

Refinements of Reaſon. Thus, even the Gifts of *Nature*, before they arrive at us, and are made fit for our Uſe, become alſo the Gifts of REASON. Without REASON, we had lived like the *Brute Creation*, upon raw Fruit, taſteleſs Herbs, and the cold Spring; or expoſed to the mercileſs Jaws of Famine, when a ſevere Winter had frozen up the Stores of the Earth, and locked the Waters under Ice.

REASON checks tumultuous Paſſion, the greateſt Enemy to the Peace of the Mind, and to the Peace of Society. Hence it has been obſerved, by the ſame Moraliſt, that all our *rational* Purſuits are *temperate* Purſuits; and that what we purſue with REASON, we never purſue *with Violence*. REASON ſubdues Anger, and prevents Cruelty; it makes a Man leſs fierce than a Lion, and leſs ravenous than a Bear. It is not *human Shape*, but human Reaſon, that places a *Man* above the *Beaſts* of the Field, and lifts him into a Reſemblance with God himſelf. Hence it is juſtly ſtyled *Divinæ particula Auræ*; *a Ray or Impulſe of the Divinity*. And, in what Senſe can a Man be ſaid to be *made after the Image of God*, unleſs by his poſſeſſing that REASON, which is a *divine Particle* of the GODHEAD? We *reſemble* not our MAKER in *Perſon* or *Complexion*, and therefore can only reſemble him in REA-

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SON, and in *Mercy*, which is the Child of this *Divine Reaſon*.

WERE we not *rational Creatures*, we could not be *religious Creatures*, but upon a Level with *Brutes*, to whom God has made no Revelation of himſelf, becauſe they want Reaſon to diſcern it, and to thank him for it. *Revelation* therefore preſuppoſes *Reaſon*, and addreſſes itſelf to *Reaſon*; and God himſelf, by perſuading us, as he does in his Word, by the Voice of *Reaſon*, appeals to our *Reaſon*. We cannot glorify God but with our Underſtandings; and we are convinced of his Goodneſs, before we adore it. To praiſe him, without *Reaſon*, is a Contradiction, and an Impoſſibility. The Devotion which he requires muſt be *free*, *rational*, and *willing*; and where it is not ſo, it is *Folly* or *Hypocriſy*.

NOR is there any Oppoſition between *Reaſon* and *Grace*, whatever ſome may weakly or diſhoneſtly maintain. In Truth, *Grace* is never given, but where *Reaſon* was already given; and the former *cannot* ſubſiſt, where the latter *does not*. We may have worldly Wiſdom without Piety; but cannot poſſeſs Piety without Underſtanding; nor does Grace, though given in the greateſt Abundance, at all ſupply the ordinary Offices of Reaſon. We do

not find, that St. *Luke* was a better Phyſician, for having written a *Goſpel*; or St. *Paul* a better *Sailor*, or better *Tent-maker*, for being an *Apoſtle*. But neither could St. *Luke* have been an *Evangeliſt*, nor St. *Paul* an *Apoſtle*, unleſs God had given them *Reaſon* as well as *Grace*. Indeed they are both the Gifts of God, only the one is *ordinary*, and the other is *extraordinary*.

REASON, even without the Light of *Revelation*, teaches us to inveſtigate Nature, and praiſe God for the Wonderfulneſs of his Works. It muſt judge of Revelation itſelf, what is ſo, and what not; and of the Words and Language, in which the Holy Oracles were at firſt conveyed; and of the Words and Language into which they were afterwards tranſlated. Now Words, many of them, being obſcure or equivocal, and ſignifying different Things to different Men, it is left to our Reaſon to determine, in what Senſe theſe Words are to be underſtood. The Spirit of God has invented for us no *new ones*, or ſuch as carry in their Sound certain and determinate Ideas, which cannot be miſtaken, but muſt infallibly be the ſame to every Man.

By the Light of REASON, we ſee about us. It warns us againſt Craft, and arms us againſt Force;

Force; and the ſame *Reaſon*, which commands us to believe in God *implicitly*, and obey him *paſſively*, does alſo command us to truſt to no Man without Inquiry, and to ſubmit to no Man without Cauſe. Thus, what is our Duty in relation to God, would be Madneſs in relation to one another: The good God cannot deceive us; but Men have Pride, Folly, Intereſt, and Complexion, all conſpiring to deceive themſelves and others.

OUR firſt Attempt to make Converts is an Appeal to their REASON, by which they are to judge *for themſelves* of the *Reaſonableneſs* of our Religion, and of the Arguments which we bring for the Defence and Recommendation of our Religion: Which Method would be exceedingly abſurd and diſhoneſt, if we did not ſuffer them to judge of our Religion, with the ſame Freedom, after they are come into it, as they did before they embraced it. This would be Trepanning one's Reaſon into Captivity, with its own Aſſiſtance; firſt to make *uſe* of it, and then to vote it uſeleſs: A ſtrange inconſiſtent Piece of Treachery, and a flat Contradiction to that *Liberty with which* CHRIST *has made us free!* As if we were to receive any *Syſtem* upon the Grounds of our *Reaſon*, without which it never can be ſincere-

ly received, and then to reject *our Reaſon* upon the Grounds of our *Syſtem*.

PRAY how do we diſtinguiſh the Beauty and Truth of the *Goſpel*, from the Impoſture and Abſurdity of the *Alcoran*, but by our *Reaſon*? How do we detect the impudent and ſenſeleſs Doctrine of *Tranſubſtantiation*, but by our *Senſe* and *Reaſon*? Why did we, or how could we, leave *Popery*, and embrace the *Reformation*, but becauſe our own private *Reaſon* told us, and *Scripture*, of which we made *ourſelves the Judges*, told us, that we left Slavery, Falſhood, and Cruelty, for Truth, Freedom, and Innocence? How did our *Saviour* prove himſelf the *Son of God*, but by Miracles, which every Eye ſaw, and every Ear heard? He appealed to the *Senſe* and *Reaſon* of Mankind; and all were convinced, that would be convinced. How do we know the Scripture to be the Word of God, but by the Deductions and Information of *Reaſon*? How can we prove our own Church, *as by Law eſtabliſhed*, to be the *pureſt* and *beſt conſtituted Church in the World*, but by the Teſtimony of impartial, *diſintereſted* REASON? For it is plain, from the great Number of *Gain-ſayers*, and *Arians*, that her *genuine Sons* have not the miraculous Gift of inſpiring, *from above*, all Men

Men with their own *Orthodox* Sentiments. How can we diſtinguiſh Religion from Enthuſiaſm, Grace from Superſtition, Faith from Credulity, the Love of the Church from the Love of Power, and the Authority of God from the Impoſitions of Men; but by *Reaſon*, or by the *Scripture*, interpreted by *Reaſon*?

IN ſhort, all who are Friends to TRUTH, are Friends to REASON, the Diſcoverer and Champion of TRUTH; and none are Foes to *Reaſon*, but thoſe who have *Truth* and *Reaſon* for their Foes. He, who has dark Purpoſes to ſerve, muſt uſe dark Means: Light would diſcover him, and Reaſon expoſe him: He muſt endeavour to ſhut out both; and make them look frightful, by giving them ill Names; for farther than Names the Vulgar inquire not.

FROM this Cauſe, Religion and Liberty flouriſh, where *Reaſon* and Knowledge are encouraged; and where-ever the latter are ſtifled, the former are extinguiſhed. In *Turky*, Printing is forbid, *Inquiry* is dangerous, and *Free-ſpeaking* is CAPITAL; becauſe they are all inconſiſtent with the MAHOMETANISM *by Law eſtabliſhed*. Hence it comes to paſs, that the wretched *Turks* are all ſtupidly ignorant, are all Slaves, all Infidels. Nor have the *Papiſts* much Advantage to boaſt above the *Mahometans*.

Their Guides and Governors lock up from them the Scripture, which is the Book of Knowledge: They teach them, that *Ignorance is the Mother of Devotion:* They baniſh Liberty, they brow-beat *Reaſon*, they perſecute Truth. In conſequence of all which, the deluded Votaries of the *Romiſh Church* are as ignorant as the *Mahometans*, as great Slaves, greater Idolaters, and greater Perſecutors; that is, in Barbarity they exceed the *Turks*, who in Barbarity exceed moſt others.

HERE, in *England*, why are we *free*, why *Proteſtants*; but becauſe we are guided by *Reaſon*, and judge for ourſelves? And none amongſt us complain of the *Liberty of the Preſs*, or the *Growth of Free-Thinking*, but thoſe who would found a Dominion upon *Stupidity* and Perſecution. Vile and woeful is that Cauſe, which muſt be ſupported by Ignorance and Miſery! And yet there are thoſe in *Great Britain*, who, though they wear a holy and venerable Livery, yet have the Boldneſs and Blaſphemy to chriſten that *impious Cauſe*, the *Cauſe of God*, and *of his Church*.

TO conclude, *Scripture*, and *Reaſon*, without which Scripture can have no Effect, are the only Teſts of every Falſhood and Impoſture, and every Superſtition. Suppoſe, for Example,

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a Reverend Doctor is touch'd with an odd Zeal for *Bowing* to the *Eaſt*; he ought to convince my *Reaſon*, that *Bowing* to the *Eaſt* is injoined in Scripture, before he injoins me to bow alſo. If he ſay, that it is injoined by the Authority of the Church, he then muſt ſatisfy my Reaſon, that the Scripture teaches the Church to teach her Members to make Bows. If he anſwer, that neither does the Scripture teach to bow to the *Eaſt*, but that the Church thinks *Bowing* decent and edifying; he muſt then prove, by rational Evidence, that what every Church thinks decent is a Duty. If he reply, that this is only true of the one Orthodox Church; then he muſt prove, that his Church is the ſole Orthodox Church, according to the Rules of the Goſpel. And if the Doctor cannot do this to my Satisfaction, then there will be an End of his Argument for his Eccleſiaſtical *Bowings*.

As we judge from Scripture, what is Orthodoxy; ſo we muſt judge from Reaſon, what is Scripture.

G.

NUMBER XXXVI.

Wedneſday, September 21. 1720.

Of the Peace *of the* Church.

IT is a ſhameful Inſult upon our Underſtandings, that of ſanctifying the moſt wicked Purpoſes, and moſt cruel Actions, with the moſt honeſt and innocent Names; and yet nothing is more frequently practiſed. Thus the worthy Name of RULER ſhall be proſtituted and pronounced aloud, to palliate, and even to juſtify, the Barbarities of a TYRANT; and that peaceable Word *Obedience* ſhall be forced to ſignify an unmanly and unnatural Patience of *Servitude*. LAWS, which were intended to protect and encourage good Men, and to reſtrain and puniſh ill ones, are often perverted into deadly Inſtruments in the Hands of Robbers and Uſurpers, againſt the Virtuous and the Harmleſs;

leſs; and the Means of Preſervation are turned into Engines of Deſtruction. The Lord's *Anointed*, a Phraſe which at firſt ſignified only a Man approved and choſen by God himſelf to be the Ruler of his People, has been ſince wreſted to mean an over-grown Plunderer, who *choſe himſelf* to be a Deſtroyer of God's People.

THESE are ſome Inſtances of the Abuſe of Words in *civil Life*. In Religion, the Abuſe has been, if poſſible, ſtill greater; of which I have given already many Proofs, and ſhall continue to give more in the Courſe of theſe Papers. I ſhall at preſent confine myſelf to a Phraſe, which is indeed a very good one, but which I have never known applied to a good Purpoſe in my Time, nor at any Time before; I mean that of the *Peace of the Church*.

BY the *Peace of the Church*, when it is taken in a rational and warrantable Senſe, I take to be meant no more than this, namely, That any Number of People, who have agreed among themſelves upon Terms of religious Communion, ſhall quietly enjoy the ſacred Privilege of meeting together to worſhip God; and whoever diſturbs them, let his Title or Pretenſions be what they will, is a Breaker of the Peace of the Church. Or if any other So-

ciety greater than the former, and of longer Standing, think fit to be provoked at this religious Indulgence, and call it a Breach of the Peace of the Church, they bring home the Charge upon themſelves, who, by breaking the Peace of the Church, mean only the not ſubmitting to their own proud Spirit, which finds Peace only in the Exerciſe of ſucceſsful Tyranny. Or if the ſmaller Society ſhould uſurp Dominion over the Thoughts of its own Members, and demand of them a Belief contrary to the Light of their Minds, or a Behaviour contrary to the Dictates and Conviction of their Conſciences; they juſtify the Claims of the greater Society over themſelves, and leave themſelves without Excuſe for having left it.

A MAN, who leaves the Communion of any particular Church, does no more break the Peace of that Church, than a Man, who leaves the Realm, breaks the Peace of the Realm; or than a Man breaks the Peace of a Family, who, whilſt the reſt dine upon Fleſh, does himſelf dine ſeparately upon Fiſh. But he doe. evidently break the Peace of the Church, who would by Violence keep any one in that Church; foraſmuch as, by ſo doing, he violates Conſcience, which is the Seat and Centre of Religion,

ligion, there being no Religion where there is no Conſcience, and conſequently no real Church. He who prays without Book, does not break the Peace of the Church, provided he forces nobody to pray as he prays: But he who would compel others to pray by his Pattern, againſt their own Liking, does not only break the Peace of the Church, but deſtroys, as far as he can, its very Eſſence; becauſe a Church is conſtituted by the *voluntary* Devotion performed by two or three met together in Chriſt's Name. If it be not *voluntary*, it is no Devotion; God will be worſhipped *in Spirit and in Truth:* And if it be voluntary, no Man can controul it.

HITHERTO, for the moſt part, the *Peace of the Church* has been unnaturally made to ſignify a blind Submiſſion to the Dictates of Prieſts in Matters of Devotion; and a blind Acceptance of all their Schemes, Dreams and Forgeries in Matters of Faith. Now here is no Church at all; but, on one hand, the Invention and Impoſition of deceitful and tyrannical Men, defacing and miſrepreſenting Religion, and wreſting it to ſerve their own wicked Purpoſes; and, on the other hand, a Tribe of Fools and Slaves, ſacrificing their Senſes, their Freedom, and their Conſciences, to Antichriſt, and worſhipping

ſhipping him, and not God. If one of theſe groveling Bigots reſume his Eyes, and break his Fetters, he forſooth is a *Schiſmatick*, he breaks the Peace of the Church.

WHY will theſe Men, ſo famed for being cloſe and crafty, be ſo plainly ſhewing us, that by the Church they mean only Themſelves; and by the Worſhip of God they mean only the Worſhip of their own Perſons and Authority? But they make this manifeſt, as by a Thouſand Inſtances, ſo particularly by this; namely, that the greateſt Rebel to God ſhall find good Quarter, provided he be but a good Subject to them; and the moſt conſcientious Servant of the Living God ſhall find no Mercy, if he diſpute to bend to their Uſurpations, and to ſwallow their Inventions for Divine Oracles. It is no matter whether you live like a Chriſtian or no, provided you do not break the *Peace of the Church*; but if you do, your being a Saint will not atone for it, nor ſtand you in the leaſt Stead.

IF I do all I can to pleaſe God, I ſhall certainly pleaſe him. Now if the Clergy had the ſame View and Deſign, my pleaſing God would alſo pleaſe them. In conſequence of this, if I thought my Abode and Communion with them a Sin, it is their Duty to encourage and exhort

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me to leave them, and to obey God rather than Men. But far from this, the Plea of pleaſing God is often no way of pleaſing them; and they ſeldom fail to damn a Man for thoſe very Actions, by which, through Chriſt, he ſhall be ſaved; namely, deſerting Authority for Conſcience, and finding out the Truth for himſelf.

A STUPID Servitude to unbounded Dominion, ſupports the Peace of the Church in ſome Countries, juſt as Ignorance, Poverty, and many Dragoons, do the Peace of the State in others.

THE breaking of the Peace of the Church, as the ſame is generally underſtood by the ignorant People, and always by the ambitious Clergy, is both a rational and a religious Duty, and the beſt Action which a Man can perform. That Man muſt be as void of Reaſon as of Religion, who quarrels with me for having different Faculties from him, and a different Way of conceiving Things. He might with as much Propriety quarrel with me for having a different Complexion, and a different Palate, neither of which is in my own Power.

IF I chriſten my Child without the *Sign of the Croſs*, or a *human Form of Words*; how do I, by this, break the *Peace of the Church*, or of good

good Neighbourhood? But he, who oppreſſes or calumniates me for thus doing my Duty, by diſcharging my Conſcience, commits an Outrage both upon Humanity and Conſcience; and not only breaks the Peace of the Church, and of Society, but by his Want of Charity declares his Want of Chriſtianity.

IF I follow the beſt Light which I can get, I do my Duty; and if I do my Duty, I pleaſe God. And who ſhall dare to tell me, that though I pleaſe God, yet I break the Peace of the Church? Would not this be to own, that the Will of God, and the Will of the Church, are oppoſite Things?

I do not believe, that there are upon Earth Two Men who think exactly alike upon every Subject; and yet our different Taſtes in Meat, Drink, Building, and Dreſs, make not the leaſt Difference in human Society; nor is it likely, that they ever will, unleſs we eſtabliſh by Law, and tack Preferments to one particular Mode of Eating, Drinking, Building, and Dreſſing; then indeed we may ſoon expect to ſee the eſtabliſhed and orthodox Maſon, Cook and Taylor, very zealous and loud for *Conformity* and *Penalties*. But at preſent, Ten Men, in Ten different Suits, can dine together upon Ten different Diſhes, and give Ten different Opinions upon One Piece of Painting or Architecture without

without breaking Friendſhip or good Humour. If indeed they be drunk either with Wine or Zeal, they will be apt to fight about the *Church* or *ſomething elſe:* But why Men in their Senſes ſhould clamour and quarrel at their Neighbour's particular Conſcience, any more than at his particular Palate, no Reaſon can be aſſigned, but the Deluſions of Prieſtcraft operating upon its genuine Iſſue, Bigotry. Is not Conſcience dearer to a Man, than his Palate, or his Fancy in Cloaths? God can receive no Worſhip that comes not from the Conſcience; and he who commands you to follow him againſt your Conſcience, commands you in Effect to provoke God out of Complaiſance to Men; and rather than do this, I hope it is lawful to break the Peace of the Church. Where the Church quadrates with a Man's Conſcience, he will of courſe comply with the Church; but where it does not, he is in Conſcience bound to deſert it; otherwiſe, to be a Conformiſt, he muſt be a Hypocrite.

CAN theſe Men be Chriſtians, who demand Submiſſion to their Dictates, in Oppoſition to the Dictates of Conſcience, and at the Peril of Salvation; and who, provided you obey them, care not though you mock God? But if they will allow *every Man to be fully perſuaded in his own Mind*, which is the Apoſtle's Rule and Precept,

Precept, then the Cry of breaking the *Peace of the Church*, is an empty knaviſh Cry.

INDIFFERENT Things in Religion there are none; and therefore the pretended Power of the Eccleſiaſtics to impoſe them, is wicked and ridiculous. If they be indifferent in their own Eyes, why are they impoſed? And if they were indifferent in the Eyes of others, nobody would refuſe them. But if I diſlike them, they are no longer indifferent to me; and if you lay any Streſs upon them, they are no longer indifferent to you. But to oppreſs, impriſon, and ruin People for Things *allowed to be indifferent*, is ſuch a Piece of Impudence, and wanton Cruelty, as cannot be deſcribed.

TO call any thing indifferent in Religion, is to own, that it has nothing to do with Religion. Now, can any Reaſon be given, why Religion ſhould be intereſted in that, in which Religion has no Intereſt? Sure theſe Men mock us, and would ſeem to be in Jeſt, did not their Proceedings, when they have Power, ſhew them to be terribly in Earneſt.

IF I neglect a Ceremony, or a Cringe, which I think a Reproach to Religion and Reaſon; do I break the *Peace of the Church*, for thus doing Honour to Religion and Reaſon? Or is it not rather an Inſult upon Both, and a manifeſt Breach of Charity, to uſe me ill for acting upon

on ſuch righteous and laudable Motives? Do I break the *Peace of the Church*, in worſhipping God after a Manner that I am verily perſuaded he will accept? Or do I not rather diſhonour him, in uſing that as Worſhip, which my Mind tells me is no Worſhip, though it ſhould be eſtabliſhed by Law?

IN *Popiſh* and *Mahometan* Countries, you ſee neither true Religion, nor the Practice of it, and yet the *Peace of the Church* there is wonderfully well ſecured by great Armies, and capital Penalties. Fire and Sword, Halters and Dungeons, are all employed to protect the *Peace of the Church*. And in every Nation under the Sun, where the *Church* enjoys the moſt *profound Peace*, the People enjoy the moſt profound Miſery, Ignorance and Slavery. Civil and Religious Liberty are certain Signs of each other, and live and die together; but I believe I may lay it down for a Maxim, that *in any Country where there is ne'er a Separatiſt from the Church, there is ne'er a Freeman in the State.* To which Maxim I may venture to add another, namely, that, *in the Eccleſiaſtical State, the* PEACE OF THE CHURCH *is but another Phraſe for the* POWER OF THE PRIESTS.

G.

NUMBER

NUMBER XXXVII.

Wedneſday, September 28. 1720.

The Enmity *of the* High Clergy *to the* BIBLE.

WE can never ſufficiently admire and adore the infinite Goodneſs of God to Mankind, in giving him a perfect Rule or Law for his Direction and Conduct; and delivering it in Books and Scriptures, which are plain and eaſy in all things neceſſary to be known to every one, who ſhall make a proper Uſe of his natural Faculties, and not weakly truſt a Pope, or ſomebody like a Pope, for their Interpretation, who will ever have ambitious or other worldly Purpoſes to ſerve, by impoſing falſe and wicked Meanings on thoſe ſacred Writings.

How ought we then to value our Bibles, daily to read them, and ſearch ourſelves for thoſe Treaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledge! And

And how jealous ſhould we be of truſting our temporal and eternal Happineſs to the Judgment and Conduct of others, who, for the moſt part, from imbibed Prejudices, or worſe Deſigns, repreſent the moſt ridiculous, chimerical, abſurd, contradictory and immoral Opinions, to be fundamental Articles of Chriſtianity!

NOTWITHSTANDING, ſuch is the Power and crafty Malice of the Popiſh and Popiſhly-affected Clergy, that in moſt Countries they have either taken the Bible (even on the Pretence of Religion itſelf) out of the People's Hands, or have made it uſeleſs there; and ſuch is the ſenſeleſs Stupidity of the gaping Herd, that they obſerve not the Injury done them, and not only ſuffer this worſt Sort of Robbery, Violence, and Injuſtice, but kiſs the Rod, and eſteem themſelves to be kindly and religiouſly dealt with.

IN all Popiſh Countries, before the *Reformation*, the Bible was locked up in the learned Languages; which effectually hindered the People from being acquainted with that Holy Book; the Prieſt ſaying, and the poor ignorant Laity believing, *That it was heretical, and the very Foundation of all Hereſy and Schiſm, for the People to read the Bible.* Indeed, after the

Re-

Reformation, ſome Tranſlations were made of it into the Vulgar Languages of particular Popiſh Countries; but were the People ever the better for it? No ſuch Matter, I can aſſure you; for no one was ſuffered to read thoſe Tranſlations without a ſpecial Licence, which was dangerous to ask for, and rendered a Man ſuſpected of heretical Pravity; and the Prieſt never granted it but to thoſe, who either would not or could not make any Uſe of it; that is, to ſuch as he well knew were pre-engaged by ſtrong Prejudices, or ſtronger Intereſts, to favour the Sacerdotal Power, and who durſt not underſtand the Word of God differently from the Clergy, who called themſelves the *Church*.

BUT in other Popiſh Countries, and particularly in *Spain*, the Bible is not extant in the vulgar Tongue, and conſequently muſt be unknown altogether to the People, who are incapable of reading it even by Licence; which can ſcarcely be called a Privilege loſt, conſidering how few durſt ask, or can get Licences, who they are that can obtain them, and what Danger they would incur in making a right Uſe of them.

ESPECIAL Care is taken to prevent the Importation of any Tranſlation of the Bible in theſe

theſe Countries; and no ſooner does any Ship of a Proteſtant Nation come to Anchor in any Popiſh Port, where the Inquiſition prevails, but ſhe is viſited and ſearched narrowly for Heretical Books, and particularly for Bibles, by the Officers of that Court, which are immediately carried to the Inquiſition, and there burned.

The brave old Marſhal *Schomberg*, when he was laſt at *Lisbon*, told a Friend of mine, with Tears in his Eyes, That having, when he came aſhore there, left a *Dutch* Bible (which had been his Grandfather's) upon the Table of his Cabin, it had been carried from the Cuſtom-houſe to the Inquiſition; and that tho' he had ſent to the chief Inquiſitor, and had ſpoken to him himſelf for it, he had not been able to recover it.

LET us now approach nearer Home, and ſee how Proteſtants are uſed in reſpect to reading the Bible. And in order to conſider this Matter, I ſhall premiſe two things: *Firſt*, That the End and Deſign of reading the Bible, is to find out the Will of God, or the Meaning which God holds forth to us therein, that we may regulate our Belief, and form our Practice thereby. And, *Secondly*, I premiſe, That to ſuch reading the Bible, it is requiſite, that we ſhould not be prejudiced by Education, in Behalf

Behalf of any Fancies; that we ſhould pay no Regard to the Authority of weak and fallible Men; that no Opinions ſhould be impoſed on us as Chriſtian Opinions; as for Example, Conſubſtantiation, Predeſtination, the peculiar Opinions of *Arius* or *Socinus*, and other Doctrines, pretended to be derived from the Word of God; and that no Man ſhould be hurt in his Body, Name, or Goods, for underſtanding the Bible in that Senſe which he thinks to have been intended by God; but that we ſhould act, and be permitted to act, in this Matter, as we do in underſtanding any other Book: For if ſuch Arts, and Crafts, and Force are uſed, to make Men underſtand the Bible in a *Lutheran*, *Presbyterian*, or *Socinian* Senſe, as form Mens Minds ſo ſtrongly to thoſe Senſes, that not a Man in the Countries, where any of thoſe Opinions prevail, does or dares differ from the Sentiments of the Public, or hurts himſelf any way by ſo doing; that Man is not properly allowed to read the Bible, or to take his Religion from thence, but receives his Religion from his *Lutheran*, or *Presbyterian*, or *Socinian* Prieſt, and might as well take his Religion from a Popiſh Prieſt, without uſing any Bible at all. For what is the Difference between taking a Popiſh Prieſt's Word for the Senſe

Senſe of the *Bible*, about the Infallibility and Authority of the Pope and the Church, or the Doctrine of Tranſubſtantiation, (which Bible the Prieſt keeps ſolely in his own Hands) and taking a Presbyter's Word, or being influenced by him, as to the Senſe of the Bible, in reſpect to the Doctrines of the divine Right of Preſbyters, and Predeſtination (which Bible he does, for Form's ſake, put into the Laymens Hand, but keeps the Senſe in his own)? If there be any material Difference, it is in this, that the Popiſh Prieſt acts a fair, open, and conſiſtent Part, in denying the Uſe of the Bible; and that the Presbyter does the ſame thing hypocritically; and that the Presbyterian Layman makes a more ſhameful and contradictory Submiſſion to his Presbyter, than a Popiſh Layman does to his Prieſt.

WHEN the Minds of the Youth, and their Paſſions, are thus engaged in behalf of certain human Compoſitions; when they are taught to reverence Men, who are hired and paid to maintain thoſe Compoſitions; when they are bred up to hate the Perſons of Men of other Perſuaſions, to abhor their Doctrines, and think it Matter of juſt Diſgrace to change the Principles of their Education: And when all this is taught as the Dictates of the Holy Scriptures; muſt they

not, under theſe Prejudices, read the Scriptures without underſtanding them? Is not that Impartiality, which is neceſſary towards finding out the true Senſe of a Book, intirely taken away? And is not a Partiality, which muſt lead Men to miſtake the Senſe of a Book, introduced?

BUT even this is nothing to what thoſe muſt go through, if they dare to underſtand the Bible differently from what is vulgarly underſtood in the Country where they live: They will be deemed *Heretics*; which is "ſuppoſed "to include every thing that is bad in it: It "makes every thing appear odious and de"formed; diſſolves all Friendſhips, and ex"tinguiſhes all former kind Sentiments, how"ever juſt and well deſerved. And from the "time that a Man is deemed an Heretic, it "is Charity to act againſt all Rules of Chari"rity. And the more Men violate the Law "of God in dealing with him, it is, in their "Opinion, doing God greater Service *. And beſides being thus put into a *Bear-ſkin*

* See a Pamphlet intituled, *The Difficulties and Diſcouragements which attend the Study of the Scriptures, in the Way of private Judgment.* A Pamphlet generally aſcribed to Dr. FRANCIS HARE, formerly Dean of *Worceſter*, and late Biſhop of *Chicheſter*, and Dean of St. *Paul*'s.

and made a Scare-crow; what is called Hereſy, undoes Men in their Trades and Callings, ſubjects them to Eccleſiaſtical and Civil Proſecutions, and deprives them of all Preferments in the Church or State: Whereas a Perſon who underſtands the Bible, as he is led by the Noſe to underſtand it, which is for the moſt part falſly, has not only fair Quarter and Reputation, and all manner of Preferments in Church and State attending him; but may be as lewd as he pleaſes, provided he have a ſufficient Portion of Zeal for his Orthodoxy, or rather for the Orthodox Prieſt.

Is it not therefore a mere Mock-ſhew, to recommend to Men the Reading of the Scriptures, if, when they read them, they muſt underſtand them juſt as their Maſter, the Prieſt, tells them, under the Penalties of all the foregoing Inconveniencies, and the foregoing Rewards, which the Prieſt, by his Power and Influence, beſtows? Biſhop *Bramhall* tells us plainly, (and too many of our modern Divines agree with him) That "the promiſcuous Li-"cence which Proteſtants give to all Sorts to "read and interpret the Scripture, is more "prejudicial, nay, pernicious, than the over-"rigorous Reſtraint of the Romaniſts." This is Proteſtant Prieſtcraft with a witneſs! For, as

Mr. *Chillingworth* moſt judiciouſly obſerve
" He that would uſurp an abſolute Lordſhi
" and Tyranny over any People, need not pu
" himſelf to the Trouble and Difficulty o
" abrogating and diſannulling the Laws mad
" to maintain the common Liberty, *or*
" *locking them up in an unknown Tongue fro*
" *the People*; for he may compaſs his ow
" Deſign as well, if he can get the Power an
" Authority to interpret them as he pleaſe
" if he can rule his People by his Laws, an
" his Laws by his Lawyers. Nay, the mo
" expedite, and therefore the more likely w
" to be ſucceſsful, is to gain the Opinion a
" Eſteem of the public and authorized I
" terpreter of them." For by *this Means*
preſſes the Laws into his Service, *to advan*
his Deſigns; and can, in Accommodation
the Opinion which Men have of the Excellen
of the Laws contained in the Scriptures, with
ſort of Grace, *put a Crown on their Head, a*
a Reed in their Hands, and bow before the
and cry, Hail, King of the *Jews! and prete*
a great deal of Eſteem, Reſpect, and Revere
to them, while he is in a more effectual ma
ner miſleading the People about their Me
ing, than if he deſtroyed the Scriptures the
ſelv

ſelves, or lock'd them up in an unknown Tongue from the Peop.

C.

NUMBER XXXVIII.

Wedneſday October 5. 1720.

Of Penance *and* Religious Revellings.

I HAVE, in two former Papers, conſider'd the Nature, Uſe, and Conſequences of *Religious Faſtings*. I ſhall, in this, inquire a little into the Merits of *Penance*, and the Devotion of *Feſtivals*; a Couple of potent Engines in the Hands of Churchmen.

JOY and Sorrow proceeding, as they do, from certain Cauſes, which neceſſarily produce them; the one troubles the Imagination, and the other delights it, whether we will or no. They are different Names given to different Operations of the Animal Spirits, which bring

to God Almighty no voluntary Worſhip, a
conſequently no Worſhip at all. The ſa
Diſorder in the Blood or Nerves, which d
covers itſelf in Sighs and Groans, would i
greater Degree, bring forth Rage and Conv
ſions, which are not the Symptoms of a G
ſpel-Spirit, but rather the Marks of Spirits
poſſeſſed in the Goſpel. People under Tr
ble, or in the Spleen, are too apt to miſt
their bodily or mental Diſorders for the Wo
ings of Divine Grace; as if the wiſe
mild Spirit of God delighted to play chil
and miſchievous Pranks with weak and unha
Men, by filling them with wild Freaks, or cr
Agonies. I doubt there are few of theſe Sor
People, who can give a Reaſon why the gr
God ſhould be better pleaſed with a ſorrow
Heart, than an aching Head.

IF God Almighty be pleaſed with our affl
ing ourſelves, he muſt be pleaſed beſt w
we afflict ourſelves moſt; and a greater De
of Suffering muſt beget a greater Portion
his Favour: And conſequently, the cutting o
ſelves with Knives, as did the Prieſts of BA
muſt be more acceptable to him, than the b
whipping ourſelves with Rods, as do the Pri
of ROME, *&c.* By the ſame Rule, if the
dangering of one's Life be well-pleaſing to h

the deſtroying of one's Life muſt be more pleaſing to him; and Deſpair and Self-Murder are more grateful Inſtances of Duty and Devotion to the God of Mercy, than barely being afraid of him, and barely making our Lives miſerable. The pious Conſequence of all which muſt be, that the Bleſſed and Beneficent God, who is the Giver of all Good, is the Author of all Evil, and all Miſery; and the Maker and Preſerver of Mankind, who is the Father of Mercies, is alſo the Deſtroyer of Mankind, and the Father of Cruelties.

NOR is this Reaſoning ſo ſtrange, or theſe Concluſions ſo unnatural, as ſome may ignorantly imagine; ſince the Prieſts, who, for the godly Ends of Dominion and Gain, were the firſt Inventors of *Sacrifices* and *Penances*, have frequently proceeded ſo far in their inhuman and diabolical Craft, as to butcher Men to appeaſe their Deity. And indeed, when once you had taken their Word for the divine Will, you renounced all Right and Pretence to judge for yourſelf, or to diſpute any Meaſure of Devotion which they had thought fit to preſcribe. Thus, for Example, if the Prieſts told you, that their God graciouſly longed for a Bonfire, and had, in his divine Goodneſs, appointed you to be the principal Faggot; as averſe as your

carnal Spirit might be to this great Honour, y
you could not decline it, without the terri
Imputation of Diſobedience, or Apoſtaſy, a
probably of Atheiſm: For, having given t
Prieſt the Property of your Body, your Thoug
and your Behaviour, you were become ALL t
Prieſt's.

THE Duty of *Penance* is, according to c
tain Churchmen, a very neceſſary Duty: b
there is another Duty quite oppoſite to it,
very neceſſary alſo; and that is, the Buſi
and Duty of *Feſtivals*. Theſe two may
deed ſeem Contradictions to each other,
to the Eye of unſanctified Reaſon are ſo;
where they are injoined by *Church-Autho*
it is our Duty to think them orthodox and c
ſiſtent, and ſo to be merry or melancholy,
to weep or laugh, juſt as *Mother-Church* co
MANDS us, in Defiance of our Conſtitutio
and our Underſtandings. We are to mo
on *Good-Friday*, becauſe on that Day our
viour died; though, if he had not, we co
not have been ſaved: And we are to take
Belly full of Meat and Mirth on *Eaſter-Sun*
becauſe Chriſt roſe on that Day from the De
though it was impoſſible for him to have c
tinued there.

PENANCE *is a ghoſtly Puniſhment impoſed by a Prieſt, or voluntarily ſuffered by a Penitent, for ſome Offence real or imagined.* Sometimes it conſiſts in Abſtinence from certain Meats, which, it ſeems, are not ſo much in Favour with Almighty God, as are others: A Piece of Cod, for Example, with rich Sauce, is leſs ſavoury in God's Sight, than a plain Piece of Beef and Cabbage, and a greater Atonement for Sin. Sometimes it is performed by Change of Apparel; and a dirty Hair-cloth is more pious and meritorious, than a clean Holland Shirt. Sometimes it is performed by rambling to ſome Church, to ſtare at a *wooden Saint*, and kiſs an old Coffin. Sometimes this holy Severity reſts altogether upon your Pocket, and God's Wrath is fervently and ſucceſsfully bribed away by the prevailing Interceſſion of ſome potent *Pieces* to his Prieſt, who will infallibly perſuade him to overlook your Guilt, and be good Friends with you. Sometimes you are to ſcarify your Backſide for the healing of your Soul, and reconcile yourſelf to Heaven by the Dint of Laſhing; which will ſometimes ſerve for *another Purpoſe*: And ſo a Scourge made of Broom, is made the Scourge of God. But, if drawing Blood on this Occaſion be ſo pious, becauſe ſo painful, I do not

ſee why the Drawing of a Tooth would not do as well; or why the Omnipotent would not be as propitious to deſolate Gums, as to bliſtered Loins.

So much for praiſing God by being ſorrowful; in which Caſe, Sickneſs and Pain are great Bleſſings. Now for the Method of pleaſing him, by being joyful; in which Caſe, Feſtivity and Merriment are great Bleſſings too! So that, we ſee, the Almighty is highly pleaſed both with our Miſery and our Happineſs.

WORLDLY Bleſſings are, no doubt, the Gifts of God, and we ought to receive them with joyful Hands, and grateful Hearts; and Religion, and Philoſophy too, teaches us to ſubmit to Afflictions and Calamities with Patience and Humility, and to conſider them either as Effects of our own Intemperance and Folly, as the neceſſary and inevitable Concomitants of human Nature, or the Strokes of Providence intended for our Correction and Amendment; nor do I deny, that it may be ſometimes lawful, and expedient too, mechanically to prepare our Minds with Diſpoſitions ſuitable to the Actions which they are to produce.

EVERY one's Experience ſhews him, that his Mind and Body operate upon one another:

Both

Both are improved by Exercise and moderate Food, raised and exhilarated by Music or Diversion, enervated by Sickness, oppressed with Drunkenness and Gluttony, fatigued with Labour; and often all the noble Faculties of the former are quite destroyed and extinguished by Distemper and Accidents.

IT may be therefore not only lawful, but our Duty, by proper Food, agreeable Conversation, and due Exercise, to prepare and keep ourselves in such a Temperament, as may best qualify us for cool Reflection, and enable us in the best manner to exert our Faculties: But from what Principle of Reason or Religion do we find, that we must work up our Passions beyond their natural Pitch, and endeavour to destroy the Serenity and Calm of our Minds, to do Homage to the Deity? who will accept no Service but what flows from a sincere and upright Heart, elevated and raised by a due Contemplation of the divine Perfections, and the Benefits received from our great Creator, or humbled by the Consideration of human Infirmities; and not intoxicated with various Music, pompous Shews, delicious Banquets, or Bottles of Brandy; nor depressed or sunk with Mortification, Penances, Fasting, or unwholsome Diet; all which have nothing to do with

true Religion, though they have been alwa
eſſential Parts of every falſe one.

LET us now ſee what Sort of Devotion the
Holy Days produce.

IDLENESS is the Nurſe of Vice, and fills th
Taverns and the Stews with many debauche
Cuſtomers, who, had they any thing elſe t
do, or would do any thing elſe, might live
chaſte and ſober as any of their Neighbour
that are ſo, becauſe they are well employe
The common People think of a *Holy Day* wit
no other View, than that they ſhall then hav
their Belly-full of Ale, and Rambling, and Idl
neſs. Perhaps, in the Morning, they hear
Sermon, which is often calculated to driv
Peace and Religion out of their Souls, and t
fill them with Bitterneſs and Rage againſt thos
who provoke them, by being ſober Subjects
and conſcientious Chriſtians. Next comes
gluttonous Meal, and a Load of Liquor, which
adds freſh Fuel to the Orthodox Zeal which
they imbibed in the Morning, and inſpires them
to deface or demoliſh Places ſacred to God'
Worſhip, and to affront and inſult every ſober
Man, who has not been at the Brandy-ſhop
and will not pronounce *Hell* and *Damnation*
according to the Word of Command. After
all this Miſchief and Bravery, they have re-
courſe

courſe to more Liquor, over which they ſwear and triumph upon their late *Orthodox Exploits*. Probably, at laſt they vomit up their Devotions in *Drury-lane*, and finiſh the *Holy Day* in a *Bawdy-houſe*. Next Morning, the Sum of the Reckoning will be this: They have loſt a Day, and with it their Innocence: They have riſqued their Health and their Souls: They have provoked God, and in his Name committed Outrages upon their Neighbours. Sweet Jeſus! Is this the Spirit of *thy* Church? Can theſe be *thy* Followers, or the Followers of *thy* Servants?

UPON the Whole, a Man may ply his Imagination with black and diſmal Ideas, till he has made his Heart as ſad and ſorrowful as he pleaſes: He may alſo, by playing with his Fancy, and by amuſing it with agreeable and humourous Images, render his Soul as merry as he pleaſes; and by theſe Means create either *Comedy* or *Tragedy* within himſelf: But neither is Wantonneſs of Spirit any Worſhip of God; nor is this Gloomineſs of Soul any Devotion to him. The *Mahometan Derviſes*, and *Indian Brachmans*, exceed us by far in Faſting and Auſterities: It is incredible what voluntary Torture and Plague they undergo in the Way of Religion. And as to godly Ranting and Roaring, the old *Pagan Bacchanals* were as mad and

and as drunk on *their Holy Days*, as we of th Eſtabliſhed Church can be on ours.

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NUMBER XXXIX.

Wedneſday October 12. 1720.

Prieſts *afraid of* Ridicule.

RELIGION, as the Popiſh Prie have diſfigured it, is only wicked and ambitious Schem contrived by them, to ſet ther ſelves above the People. Th is ſo true, that where-ever the Prieſts have t moſt Power, Religion has the leaſt. Bei neither appointed by the Law of Nature, n the Law of Chriſt, they are only Intruders i to the Affairs of Religion; which is therefo under an Uſurpation, while it is under ther So that their Foundation being falſe, they a in moſt Countries reduced to ſupport it by fal

Facti

Facts, and deceitful Appearances. And as they are thus obliged to cover Fraud with Fraud, and ſupport one Violence by another, it is no Wonder, that we find it often ſo carefully hidden under Inventions, and deformed by Abſurdities; and all thoſe Inventions and Abſurdities defended by Cruelty, and a ſtrong Hand.

THIS ſtrange Jumble of Fictions they have the Front to call by the holy Name of *Religion*, and gravely to create Faith out of Lyes: And with the groveling Multitude, whoſe Eyes are in the Earth, all this paſſes off well enough; They have fearful Hearts, and ſimple Heads, and ſo ſtand always prepared to be frightened or deluded at the prieſtly Word of Command. But becauſe the Craft lies ſubject to daily Detection from rational and diſcerning Men, its Champions have raiſed loud Cries, and ſtrong Prejudices, againſt the two principal Weapons by which their Cauſe is moſt annoyed; I mean the Weapons of REASON and RIDICULE; the former of which diſcovers Truth, and the latter expoſes Fraud.

WHAT civil Treatment theſe Reverend *Seers* afford to *Reaſon*, I have ſhewn elſewhere; and ſhall handle, in this Paper, the Buſineſs of *Ridicule*, which they always repreſent as

as impious and profane, when ever it medd
with the Caſſock; and yet always exerciſe
according to their Talents, without Mer
when the waggiſh grave Creatures are pleaſed
be arch upon *Diſſenters* or *Free-Thinkers*.

To them is no doubt owing, that frequ
but falſe Saying, now in the Mouth of ev
Ignorant; namely, that *it is an eaſy Matte
make a Jeſt upon Religion or the Prieſthoo*
which, whether they are aware of it or n
is ſaying that their Religion and its Prieſts a
Jeſt. For he, upon whom the Jeſt is m
does, in Effect, make the Jeſt; otherwiſe i
none. Religion and Virtue cannot be ridicul
and whoever attempts it, by ſhewing himſe
Villain, raiſes Horror inſtead of Laughter, wh
is the End of Ridicule. But the vending
Grimace for Religion, and ſetting up for P
without Virtue, are the natural Subjects of
and Merriment.

WHOEVER fears Ridicule, deſerves R
cule. He is conſcious of a weak Side, a
knows that he cannot ſtand a Laugh. This
the Caſe of ſacred Grimace, or *Gravity*, wh
Men of Senſe ſee to be only a ſtudied Reſtra
laid upon the Muſcles of the Face, and
Joints of the Body, and teaching them to mo
not by the Impulſes of Nature, and the M
tions of the Heart, but by Deſign, either
attract Admiration, or obtain Credit, or g

Followers. And therefore ſacred Grimace dreads Men of Senſe. However, it is never to be ſet aſide; for this ſame affected Demureneſs, ridiculous as it is in itſelf, is a ſolemn Bait to catch the Mob, whoſe Reſpect always follows their Wonder. The Vulgar are caught, like Woodcocks, by the Eyes; and led, like Calves, by the Ears; Shew and Sound lead their fat Heads captive. It is therefore no Wonder, that in Popiſh Countries, a ſhewy Chancel, a curious tall Steeple, gilded Organs, and a delicate Ring of Bells, keep the *Many* on the Parſon's Side, make them all good Churchmen; and always get the better of a plain Religion, that has its Abode only in the Heart, and wants all the above-mentioned Marks of the true Church. Beſides all this, there is more Mirth, and more Holy Days, in their Orthodox Faith, than in the contrary Scheme, which obliges Men to earn Heaven with the Sweat of their Brows, and take Pains to be ſaved.

THESE, however, are but ſmall Inſtances of *Ridicule*, taken from the Force and Grimace of an external Religion. I ſhall here give Inſtances much more conſiderable, as well as much more ridiculous. Do we not ſee the pretended Succeſſors of the Apoſtles, at home and elſewhere, inſtead of making Tents, or converting the World, living voluptuouſly, and pro-

promoting the Exciſe? Do we not frequen
ſee the Embaſſadors of God, ſent to prom
Virtue and Peace, and the Obſervance of
Laws, p omoting Strife, frequenting debauc
Houſes, rooking after Wealth, and plaguing
reviling their Neighbours? Do we not ſee
Men, who have the Call of the Spirit, rio
in all the Works of the Fleſh? Do they not
Livings with Money, and then claim them
Divine Right? Do they not chop and jock
away poor Pariſhes for ſuch as are richer,
yet pretend to have upon their Hands the C
of Souls; though, by ſuch vile Bargaining, th
ſhew that they value as little thoſe Souls wh
they have juſt bought, as they do thoſe wh
they have lately ſold? Do not many of the
though they are void of all Merit, yet dem
great Reſpect; and though ignorant, prete
to teach, and to reveal God's Will, which
already revealed, and yet live as though the
were no God? And do they not, without obe
ing God, ſet up to command Men? Do th
not ſeek Honour from their Cloth, which
they diſhonour? And do they not, for the blac
eſt Crimes, claim Sanctuary from the Churc
which Church is the People, which Peop
they abuſe and deceive? Do they not prete
to mend others, without being better th
others, but in Truth more idle and proud th

all others; two Qualities neither ſuited to the Welfare of Religion, nor of human Society? Do they not flatter and ſupport the worſt of Tyrants, plague and diſtreſs, and often deſtroy, the beſt of Kings; and in both Caſes do they not belye the Holy Ghoſt, and pervert his Meaning? Do they not pretend to be appointed for the Good of Mankind, and yet always make Mankind, where-ever they have Power, thoroughly miſerable, baſe, poor, ignorant, and wicked? And finally, do they not invent vile Lyes for vile Ends, and then blaſphemouſly make God Almighty to father them?

HERE is ſuch a motley Mixture of oppoſite Principles and Practices, as will always render thoſe, who are chargeable with them, the Contempt or Abhorrence of all Men who have Eyes and Underſtanding. Jeſt and Scorn will ſubſiſt as long as their Cauſes ſubſiſt; and Clergymen, of all others, will be moſt expoſed to them, while they continue to deſerve them; becauſe more Modeſty, Truth, and Conſiſtency, may be expected from them than from any others. It is but a Piece of Juſtice due to Religion, to ridicule thoſe, who, as far as they can, ridicule Religion, though they ſet up for its Defenders. Ridicule, when it has no longer Matter to feed on, will die of itſelf; and the Clergy, to avoid it, have no more to do, but not

to

to deſerve it: But to go on complaining, wi
out amending, is to nouriſh Raillery and S
tire, by their own Actions. But as the refor
ing themſelves is a Practice ſeldom kno
among High-Churchmen; Clamour, Lyes, t
Oppreſſion, are the conſtant Remedies they
ply to the great Grievances of Wit and Ri
cule, as often as they meddle, or ſeem to medd
with the Cloth. This will abundantly app
from the following Inſtance, which will alſo ſh
the wonderful Vigilance and Jealouſy of Chur
men, in Behalf of the Trade.

MOLIERE, having, in his Plays, brou
upon the Stage Characters from the higheſt Q
lity and Profeſſions in *France*, without offe
ing either, drew, in his *Tartuffe*, an excell
and ſtrong Picture of a Hypocrite, who, thou
carefully diſtinguiſhed from a Man *ſincerely* re
gious, yet happened to reſemble the *Churchm*
ſo much, that they raiſed a terrible Outcry agai
the Play; and, according to their laudable C
ſtom, drew Heaven, Head and Shoulders, in
their Quarrel. *Tartuffe* was, it ſeems, their R
preſentative General, and in ridiculing his god
Grimaces, and Stoical Devotion, *Moliere*, th
ſaid, ridiculed them. In fine, by expoſing t
concealed Villain and Debauchee, the whole Po
of the Prieſts thought themſelves expoſed.

ZEALO

ZEALOUS therefore for the Dignity of the Caſſock, and juſtly apprehending, that a Contempt upon Hypocriſy would bring a Contempt upon the *Order*, they applied to the Court; I ſay to the *Court*, where, by a religious Subſerviency to the Ambition, Luſt, and all the Rogueries of the Great, this Sort of Creature always finds Friendſhip and Countenance. That arbitrary and debauched Court could refuſe the Prieſts nothing; and the Play was forbid. Thus the *Tartuffes* of the Church redeemed from Scorn the *Tartuffe* of the Stage: The *Picture* was ſecured from being ſhewn, by the Number, Clamour, and Intereſt of the *Originals*.

NOT content to rail with all due clerical Bitterneſs againſt this Comedy, and curſe the ingenious Author by Word of Mouth; they detached one from their Body to curſe him in Print. This Chriſtian Author, without ever having ſeen the Play, pronounced it Diabolical: He affirmed, that *Moliere* had a Devil, that he was a Devil incarnate, a Devil in Man's Shape, a Libertine, an Atheiſt, and one who ought to be *burned* in this World, as he would aſſuredly be *damned* in the next. For the Vengeance of theſe Meſſengers of Peace never ſtops at the Death of their Victim, nor will they allow their

their Maker to have more Mercy than them ſelves.

To ſhew how juſtly theſe holy Perſons we alarmed on this Occaſion, I ſhall here give Sketch of *Tartuffe*'s Character, as drawn that Play. He is a Fellow, who, from godly Outſide, and great Poverty, is taken an honeſt Gentleman, credulous and devo into his Family, and permitted to govern He is a great Glutton, and a great Preten to Faſting; a great Deſpiſer of Money, b rooks all he can from his deluded Patron. will not ſpeak to my Lady's Maid, till he h covered her Bubbies with his Handkerchief, afraid is the Saint of Temptation; but at t ſame time he tempts my Lady herſelf to Adu tery, and endeavours to debauch his Benefa tor's Wife with Heaven in his Mouth. Th Gentleman's Son diſcovers to his Father the Solicitations of the Hypocrite, which he h overheard; and the Lady owns and confirm them; but neither of them is believed: Th poor bewitched Man cries, *You are all En mies to the godly* Tartuffe; and tells him, tha to make him Amends, he will give him hi Daughter, and ſettle his Houſe and Eſtate up on him. *The Will of the Lord be done*, ſay the Hypocrite. Accordingly, by an inſtan Deed

Deed, to the apparent Ruin of his Family, he makes this godly Villain Heir of all he has, with a Right of preſent Poſſeſſion. The Lady, not knowing what was done, does, by putting her Husband under a Table, make him a Witneſs of the holy Lecher's Deſigns and Importunity. He is by this convinced; but when aſhamed of himſelf, and enraged at the Ingrate, he bids him get out of his Houſe: *No Sir*, ſays *Tartuffe*: *It is your Turn to get out; the Houſe is mine, and you ſhall know it; I will be revenged on you on Behalf of Heaven, which you would wound through my Sides.* Behold an Orthodox Pattern of the uſual Claim of *Divine Right* to the Wages of Villainy and Deluſion!

ALL this Behaviour, and theſe Speeches, were ſuch manifeſt Marks of the Church, that all its genuine Sons dreaded their coming upon the Theatre. Their Rogueries are all ſacred, and muſt not be ſet to View.

MOLIERE, to take away, as much as was poſſible, all reaſonable Ground of Clamour from the Eccleſiaſtics, had not ſo much as ſuggeſted in the Play, that *Tartuffe* was a Prieſt; and only called his Comedy, *The Impoſtor*, in general. Beſides all this, he had dreſſed up his Rogue like a Man of the World. He had not given him ſo much as a flapping Bever, but a ſmart ſecular Cock,

Cock, with a Sword, a good Head of Hair, Cravat, and a gaudy Coat. But all this Precaution of *Moliere*'s availed not; *Tartuffe* had the Conduct, Craft, and Spirit of a Prieſt, though diſguiſed like a Layman; and the Clergy found themſelves whipped upon *Tartuffe*'s Back.

EIGHT Days after *Tartuffe* was forbid to be acted, the Court was entertained with a very irreligious Play, called *Scaramouch*. After it was over, the King told a certain Prince, that he wondered why thoſe People, who were ſo ſcandalized at *Moliere*'s Comedy, did not ſay a Word of this. O *Sir*, anſwered the Prince, *the Reaſon is plain; the Play of* Scaramouch *only makes a Jeſt of God and Religion, in which theſe Gentlemen are no wiſe concerned: But* Moliere *dared to bring the Prieſts upon the Stage; which is not to be ſuffered.*

NUMBER XL.

Wedneſday, *October* 19. 1720.

Of PRIESTLY CRUELTY.

A GOOD Man is diſtinguiſhed by his Humanity, as is the good God by his Mercy. Where there is no Humanity, there can be no Grace: We cannot poſſeſs at the ſame time the Spirit of God, and the Spirit of a Brute or Demon. Charity itſelf, the moſt ſublime Chriſtian Grace, ſeems to be only Humanity guided and animated by Piety: And this is the more likely, for that it is the Buſineſs of the Chriſtian Religion, to recover to human Nature thoſe Virtues, which were either loſt or leſſened by the Fall of *Adam*. Had Man continued as he was made, perfect, a new Covenant, and another Inſtitution, had been unneceſſary.

HUMANITY then is an amiable Virtue, the Characteriſtic of a Man; and of a civilized, gentle, benevolent; purged from Rage, and every unſociable Paſſion.

BUT the Appetites and Paſſions of being too powerful for Reaſon, and the of Nature; Religion was inſtituted to and quell them. For this End, it propo Sanctions and Reſtraints, the Favour o to the Virtuous, and threatens his Diſp to the Wicked, in this Life; and, in the ſtill more adequate Rewards and Puniſh even thoſe of Heaven and Hell. This great Deſign of Religion; and it effe anſwers the ſame, where its own honeſt a ple Dictates are obſerved and followed; which Dictates nothing can be more r reaſonable; the principal Precept of the next after our Belief in *Jeſus Chriſt*, being Peace and Love: *A new Commandme* our bleſſed Saviour, *I give unto you, t love one another.*

IN Conſequence of this Doctnine, the Heavenly Temper which it inſpire firſt Chriſtians lived together in perfe cord, Love and Charity; and yet the Queſtion to be made, but they differe each other in their Conceptions abou

Points in Religion; as we ſee the Apoſtles themſelves alſo differed on ſeveral Occaſions, and expreſſed ſome Warmth in theſe their Differences.

THIS ſame Spirit of Charity and Love continued amongſt the firſt Chriſtians, till lying, crafty, and ſelfiſh Men, calling themſelves Miniſters, and aſſuming to be Teachers, filled them with the Spirit of Diſcord, and inſtructed them to hate one another. They rent them into Parties, inſpired them with the Bitterneſs of Faction, and taught them its Watch-words, by which they were to diſtinguiſh themſelves from all other Chriſtians: *I am of* Paul, *I of* Apollos, *and I of* Cephas, and the like Cant, all of Zeal, but void of Senſe and Religion, and a direct and miſchievous Tendency to foliſh Faith in Chriſt, and to place it upon len; and, in fine, to turn Chriſtianity into aballing. They likewiſe marked out all who ould not be driven nor deceived by them, ith malicious and opprobrious Names, pro- r to expoſe them to Hatred and ill Uſage. *retic*, *Apoſtate*, *Unbeliever*, *Schiſmatic*, and like hard and equivocal Words, were found angely effectual towards ſtirring up Rage, venge, and relentleſs War, againſt thoſe unpy People who were miſcalled by them;

ſo effectual! that the ſame Set of Men never ſuffered the ſame Set of Words to wa ſolete, but to this Day uſe them, and cauſe to be uſed, to the ſame impious and antich Purpoſe, and (where the Law does not re their bloody Hands, and guard the Innocent the ſame Succeſs.

WHEN theſe ungodly and mercileſs *ſiaſtics* had thus, under the Cloak of Re craftily raiſed the blind Reſentment, an pious Zeal, of their deluded Followers, their Chriſtian Brethren, who preferre Spirit of the Goſpel, and the honeſt C tions of their Conſciences, to the Pri Commands of Men; there followed ſ mazing Inſtances of Cruelty, and ſuch Scenes of Blood, as muſt affect the Hear the Eyes, of all who read them, or them, if they poſſeſs either Chriſtian Gr natural Compaſſion. Chriſtians were, b Prieſts, ſet on to butcher Chriſtians; make Havock of each other, in the N that Religion, which was diſtinguiſhed all other Religions, by a Spirit of M Mercy, and Love: And all this, perh their different Manner of explaining a M which could not be explained; or which plained, ceaſed to be one.

THIS reſtleſs and unrelenting Rage, which Chriſtians practiſed, at the Inſtigation of their Clergy, upon one another, for Thoughts and Opinions which they could not help, was a ſtrong and laſting Stumbling-Block in the Way of the *Unconverted*; who could have but ſmall Appetite for a Religion, which diſowned all Kindred to Peace and Humanity, and inſpired its Votaries with ſuch cruel Hatred, and ſuch dreadful Fury: For, in ſhort, that was the Religion which they were to embrace; a Religion no longer to be found in the Goſpel of *Chriſt*, but in the ridiculous Syſtems, and ſelfiſh Inventions, of *Prieſts*. And it was no wonder that the *Heathens* were backward and afraid to embrace a Religion, in which the involuntary Miſtake of a prieſtly Diſtinction, without a Meaning, might coſt them their Lives, and ruin their Families.

SO terrible and deformed had mercileſs Chriſtian Prieſts rendered the merciful and amiable Chriſtian Religion! Their outrageous Zeal was become ſo powerful, and had ſuch bloody Effects, that the *Pagan* Perſecutions were real Advantages to Chriſtianity, as they gave it a breathing Time from the more fatal Perſecutions, and even Adulterations, of its own Prieſts; who, while the civil Sword was over

their Heads, being obliged to abſcond or could not throw about their Balls of Con tion and War; and therefore, againſt t Will, left Religion to flouriſh, as it always under thoſe *Pagan* Perſecutions, which their turbulent and ſeditious Behaviour had brought upon it. This is indeed their hi Praiſe, that the Church reaped Good from Wickedneſs.

THE *Pagan Perſecutions* no ſooner ce but the War of the *Chriſtian Prieſts* re menced; and the Perſecutions raiſed by were ever more mercileſs, and more dre than thoſe which were raiſed by the *Ha* Princes; foraſmuch as they added, as they could, the Deſtruction of the Soul to of the Body: So complete was their geance! And, beſides, it had no End: Severity of the *Heathens* had long and fre Intermiſſions; but the Cruelty of the *Prieſ* inſatiable.

THE Perſecutions practiſed by the *Pa* had moreover this Mitigation, that they occaſioned for the moſt part by the Word external Behaviour of Chriſtians, who temned their Gods, neglected their Ter and ridiculed their Manner of Worſhip: which, though they had Reaſon and Tru

their Side; yet they provoked by ſo doing theſe ignorant Bigots, whoſe falſe Religion laid no Reſtraint upon their Paſſions, but on the contrary greatly inflamed them. But the prieſtly War was waged againſt the Mind itſelf; the free and independent Mind! They would be controuling the *voluntary*, *neceſſary*, and *invincible* Motions and Operations of the Soul; and be putting Bonds upon the Imagination, which is as ungovernable as the Wind or the Sea. You muſt ſay after them, nay, you muſt *think* after them, and believe by their Direction; and either be Slaves or Hypocrites. A terrible and inflexible Tyranny! It was to no Purpoſe to alledge, that you could not perform Impoſſibilities, nor ſee with other Mens Eyes: You muſt be puniſhed for what you could not help; you muſt be delivered to *Satan*, in ſpite of your Innocence; and rewarded with Hell for your Sincerity, and Well-meaning: And the ſame honeſt Qualities which intitled you to the certain Favour of God, provoked the certain Vengeance of his pretended Embaſſadors; to whoſe Empire, Virtue and Truth are ever the moſt formidable Foes. To complete this ghoſtly Barbarity, not appeaſed by Death and Damnation, your good Name muſt be murdered with your Body,

and your Memory loaded with monſtrou
lumnies, and bitter Defamations; which
cileſs Treatment could be expected only
that accurſed Spirit, who had been a *Ly*
a Murderer from the Beginning; or from
who are acted by him. To pity you, wa
pardonable; and to ſpeak well of you, w
involve all thoſe who did it, in your D
Thus holy Wrath is, of all others, the ſo
kindled, the fierceſt while it burns, and the ſl
in going out, if ever it goes out.

IT would be endleſs to give Inſtanc
the bloody Spirit of ſuch ſort of Church
They are the only Body of Men upon
who poſſeſs leaſt of human Compaſſion.
have been even ingenious in Cruelty,
ſhewed vaſt Invention in their rigid, v
implacable, and exquiſite Manner of exe
it. *Ita feri, ut ſe mori ſentiat*, ſeems to
been the Doctrine and Delight of the C
as well as of *Caligula*. Neither he, nor
laris, nor *Perillus*, nor *Nero*, nor any
Pagan Monſter, who made himſelf Spor
human Agonies and Miſery, has exceeded
in the Variety and Inhumanity of his pro
Tortures, nor equalled them in the Length.

IT is a melancholy Obſervation, tha
Mahometans, who by Principle uſe the S

as their great and moſt prevailing Apoſtle for the Propagation of their Religion, do yet frankly tolerate Chriſtianity, and every Sect of it, all over their Dominions; and that, on the contrary, *Chriſtians*, who by the Doctrine of the Goſpel are allowed the Uſe of no Means but thoſe of Gentleneſs and Perſuaſion, to promote the Faith of *Jeſus Chriſt*, do yet exerciſe Fierceneſs and Barbarity upon all who differ from them, where-ever the Mercy of the Government does not reſtrain the Cruelty of the Clergy. Thus far the *Turks* act, as if they were conducted by Grace, and obeyed the Precepts of our bleſſed Saviour; and thus far the Chriſtians act, as if they had adopted the Spirit and Fierceneſs of *Mahomet*, and renounced the Goſpel for the *Alcoran*.

HOWEVER, that I may not ſeem partial to the *Mahometans*, I ſhall add this mournful Reflection; namely, *That too many of the Chriſtian Clergy do juſtly ſhare with theſe Infidels, the infamous Praiſe of having almoſt diſpeopled the Earth. The Infidels have ſlain their Thouſands, and They their Ten Thouſands.* They have been the great Promoters of Cruelty, and the Sword; they have been the conſtant Patrons of Arbitrary Power, that mighty Engine for rendering Mankind few and miſerable; they

have been the continual Authors of War, F
mine, and Maſſacres; and, in fine, they ha
been the great Inſtruments of driving Virt
Truth, Peace, Mercy, Plenty, and People, o
of the World. *Kill all*, ſaid the Abbot A
nold, a Monk militant, to the Army, which h
ing employed by the Church to ſlaughter t
poor pious *Albigenſes*, had taken the City
Bezeir, and being Laymen, were inclining
have ſome Mercy; *Kill all*, cried this bloo
Prieſt: *God knows his own, and will rew*
them hereafter. Accordingly Two Hund
Thouſand of theſe conſcientious Chriſtians, a
Catholics mixed with them, were inſtantly b
cher'd for the Church.

To conclude, our modern Claimers
Church-Authority do but contend for the ſa
Power and Advantages, which enabled a
prompted theſe their Brethren to execute ſu
numerous and melancholy Miſchiefs; a
whether they ought to poſſeſs that Power, a
theſe Advantages, or no, I take to be the gr
Point in Debate between the Biſhop of *Ban*
and his Adverſaries.

NUMBER XLI.

Wedneſday, October 26. 1720.

The Folly of the CLERGY's *demanding* Reſpect *when their* Characters *are bad: With the Equity of* Univerſal Toleration, *and of judging for ourſelves.*

THERE is not a greater Inſult upon the Underſtandings of Mankind, than for Prieſts to challenge Reſpect from their Habit, when they have forfeited it by their Behaviour. There is no Sanctity in Garments. A Roſe in a Man's Hat does not inlarge his Piety. Grace is not conveyed by a Piece of Lawn, or Chaſtity by the wearing of a Girdle. A black Gown has neither more Senſe, nor better Manners, than a black Cloak. Nor is a black Cloak more edifying than a Fuſtian Frock; no more than a

Cambrick Bib is an Antidote againſt Lewdneſs, or an Atonement for it.

THIS conſecrating of Garments, and deriving Veneration from a Suit of Cloaths, is barefaced Prieſtcraft. It is teaching the Practice of Idolatry to a Gown and Caſſock. If a little ſenſeleſs Pedant, who is a living Contradiction to Virtue, and good Breeding, can but get into Orders, and cover himſelf with Crape, the firſt thing which he does, is to overlook and affront all Mankind, and then demand their Reverence. His Surplice is his Citadel, and he claims the Impunity of an Embaſſador for being graceleſs and ſaucy.

AS to the common Defence which is made for their Immoralities; namely, That they are Fleſh and Blood as well as other Men; it is a wretched Piece of Sophiſtry. If they are not better than others, how are they fit to mend others? And if they cannot leave their Captivity to Sin and *Satan*, how come they to claim ſo near an Alliance with Heaven? If they have God's Commiſſion in their Pockets, and yet will engage in another Service, what Name and Treatment do they deſerve? We know the Fate of Rebels and Deſerters in a Lay-Government. Can Men ſucceed to the Apoſtles with the Qualities and Behaviour of Apoſtates?

ſtates? How will they reconcile a holy Calling to infamous Lives? A Clergyman who is as bad as an ill Layman, is conſequently worſe. In a holy Character, there is no Medium between doing Good, and doing Miſchief; ſince the Influence of Example is ſtronger than that of Precept. As the Doctrine and Practice of Piety make up the Profeſſion of a Clergyman, he who deſerts Truth and Holineſs, deſerts his Profeſſion, and ought to be no longer owned for a Teacher of Religion, but ſhunned and hated, as a Foe to Religion and Mankind.

I have great Reſpect for the Office of a Clergyman; and for his Perſon, if he deſerve it. But if his Doctrine or Practice diſgrace his Order; we cannot help contemning the Man. The Clergy are the beſt or the worſt of Men; and as the firſt cannot be too much honoured, the latter cannot be too much deſpiſed. It is of good Example, and there is equal Reaſon in it. Why ſhould Virtue and Villainy fare alike? Names do not change Qualities, nor Habits Men. Where is the Equity of Rewards and Puniſhments, and conſequently the Force of all Laws, Human and Divine, if vile Men muſt be reverenced, and the good can be no more?

IT is but reaſonable, that all Men ſhould be judged by their Actions, and reverenced, or ſcorned, according to the Goodneſs or Wickedneſs of their Lives, without any Regard had to their Titles or Garbs; which ſignify no more than a Breath of Wind, or the Bark of a Tree.

THE Clergy have made ſuch a terrible and inhuman Uſe of Power, in all Ages and Countries where they could come at it, that the Laity ought to keep their Nails always pared, and their Wings clipped, in this Particular. Reaſon and Liberty are the two greateſt Gifts and Bleſſings which God has given us, and yet where-ever a prieſtly Authority prevails, they muſt either fly or ſuffer. They are Enemies to the Craft, and muſt expect no Toleration. Darkneſs and Chains are the ſureſt Pillars of the ſacerdotal Empire, and it cannot ſtand without them.

LET us remember Archbiſhop *Laud*, who having got the Regal Power out of a weak Prince's Hands, into his own, ſet his Face againſt Truth, Property, Conſcience, and Liberty, and trampled them all under Foot for ſeveral Years together. A Spirit of Cruelty and Dominion governed this Man, and he governed King and People. His Heart was ſo

ſo impiouſly bent upon deſtroying Conſcience, and the Conſtitution, and exalting the Prieſthood, that when any Man was oppreſſed in a paltry and tyrannical Biſhop's Court, the Judges in *Weſtminſter-hall* durſt not obey their Oaths, and the Law, by relieving him; but were forced to be forſworn, to avoid the Anger of his *Grace*. This upſtart, Plebeian Prieſt hoped to ſee the *Time, when ne'er a Jack Gentleman in* England *would dare to ſtand before a Parſon with his Hat on*. A fine Scene truly! to ſee a Gentleman of Fortune and Breeding, ſtand ſtooping, and bare-headed, to a ſmall, ill-nurtured Vicar; who had, perhaps, formerly cleaned his Shoes, and lived upon the Crumbs that came from his Table.

LET us look back into former Ages, and round *Europe*, at this Day, and ſee whether abject Slavery in the People is not, and always has been, the certain Conſequence of Power in the Prieſts. It cannot be denied.

I THANK God, I know no Power which our Clergy have, but that of ſuing for Tythes, and the like Privileges, which they receive from the Law alone. Thoſe Eccleſiaſtics who claim, by Divine Right, any other Power, than that of Exhortation, talk Nonſenſe, and belye the New Teſtament. To the Law, and the People who made that Law, they owe their Bread; and

and to ſet up for an Independency, in Oppoſition to both, and pretend to a Maſterſhip over them, is arrogant, dangerous, and ought to be penal. I am told, that it is capital, here in *England*, for a Proteſtant to go over to the *Romiſh* Religion; and yet ſhall a Prieſt dare publicly, from the Preſs and the Pulpit, to claim and juſtify the moſt eſſential, and moſt formidable Principles of Popery; and thereby declare his Reconciliation with that bloody Religion, which is ſupported by Frauds, Bondage, and human Slaughter? And ſhall he, for all this, go unqueſtioned? This, in my Opinion, is to contend with Impunity for Uſurtion and Rebellion.

SOME would ſeem to qualify theſe Pretenſions, by ſaying, That they claim a Power, but not an independent Power. Which ſeems in this caſe a ſort of Contradiction: For if it is a Power, and yet depends upon another Power; then it is, properly ſpeaking, a Juriſdiction of Subjection, and an Authority under Authority. And while the Law, and the Hierarchy, are thus owned to be Maſter and Man, we deſire no more.

IT is certainly as impious as unjuſt to deny an unlimited Toleration to all Diſſenters whatſoever, who own the Laws, and our civil Form

of

of Government. As to their religious Opinions, they are juſtified in them by Sincerity; and even where that is wanting, God alone is able to judge, and alone has a Right to puniſh. In Matters of Conſcience, he who does his beſt, does well, though he be miſtaken. Here all Men muſt determine for themſelves. He who follows another in this Caſe, without Inquiry, is Man's Votary, and not God's. As we have a Right to inquire into the Truth of any Religion, we have alſo a Right to leave it, if it appear falſe: But if it ſtand the Teſt of Examination, and appear true, then is our Adherence to it founded upon our own Judgment, and not upon Authority. If there be no Right of Inquiry, where is the Uſe of Perſuaſion, which implies Doubt? Or of reading the Scripture, which implies Underſtanding? We believe not a thing, till we think it true; and cannot believe it, if we think it falſe: And to puniſh Men for having Eyes, or having none, is equally deviliſh and tyrannical.

MEN diſagree daily about Matters which are ſubject to the Examination of Senſe; and is it likely, that we can be all of a Mind about Things which are inviſible and diſputable? Doctors themſelves are daily cavilling; every one contradicts another, yet all are in the right,

and

and each demands our Faith to his particular Invention. We cannot follow all; and among equal Authorities, pray which is the beſt? For the ſame Reaſon that we cannot believe every one of them, we need believe none of them, upon their own Word.

IT is moreover juſt, that all Proteſtants ſhould be equally employed in a State to which they are equally well affected. The Magiſtrate has nothing to do with Speculations that purely concern another Life: Nor is it of any Conſequence to him, whether his Subjects have a greater Fondneſs for a Cloak, or a Surplice: Their Affections to the political Power, and their Capacity to ſerve it, are only to be conſulted and encouraged. Provided a Man love Liberty and his Country, what is it to the Commonwealth whether he ſing his Prayers, or ſay them? Or whether he think a *Biſhop*, or a *Preſbyter*, the nearer Relation to St *Paul*?

THESE two Words (*Biſhop* and *Presbyter*) ſignify, in Scripture, one and the ſame thing, and are equally uſed to deſign one and the ſame Officer. Our great Churchmen, indeed, have been pleaſed to think the Bible miſtaken in this Matter, and to be in the right themſelves. They have made Epiſcopacy and Presbytery as oppoſite to each other, as Paradiſe and Purgatory;

ry; and have frequently gone to cutting of Throats, to prove their Point.

I MUST confeſs, that a Dioceſe, and a Seat in the Houſe of Lords, are unanſwerable Reaſons for the Divine Right of Epiſcopacy. There is no way of confuting them. You may as well argue with a *Guiney* Merchant againſt the ſelling of Slaves.

BESIDES, a Lordly Creature, who never preaches, (Miracles having long ago ceaſed) and keeps a great Table and Equipage, and enjoys all the great and good Things of this Life, carries in all theſe Marks ſuch an Evidence of his being St. *Paul*'s right Heir, in a lineal Deſcent, that I wonder any body dare doubt it.

HOWEVER, as the plaineſt Things in Faith are made doubtful among Divines, who have an admirable Knack at ſtarting Difficulties, where nobody elſe would expect them; I am of Opinion, that the Teacher who walks on Foot, has as good a Title to diſpute about Religion, and to maintain his own, as the Right Reverend Doctor, who ſupports his Orthodoxy with a Coach and Six; and ſhould be as much encouraged by the Civil Magiſtrate, if his Principles and Behaviour ſquare with the Conſtitution. Is a Man a better Neighbour, or Subject, for nodding to a Table, at the upper

End

End of a Chancel, or for pronouncing his Faith towards the East? Our Churchmen may find good Cauſe to injoin theſe *neceſſary Things*, which the Scripture had forgot, and enjoy great Benefit and Obedience from the Practice of them; but in temporal Matters, I am not fully convinced, that they make a Man's Head wiſer, or his Heart honeſter.

A good Proteſtant is ſuch, not becauſe he was born ſo, according to the canting Abſurdity in Vogue, or bred ſo, ſince in Infancy Religion is acquired like a Leſſon in Grammar, purely by the Help of Memory; and therefore Children learn it, whether it be good or bad, as they do Language, from their Nurſe, or their Parents: But he is a Proteſtant, becauſe his Judgment and his Eyes inform him, that the Principles of that Faith are warranted by the Bible, and conſiſtent with our civil Liberties; and he thinks every Syſtem which is not ſo, to be Forgery and Impoſture, however dignified or diſtinguiſhed.

I cannot here omit taking Notice of an old fallacious Cry, which has long rung in our Ears, namely, that of *No Biſhop, no King*. This ſolid Argument was uſed, with Royal Succeſs, by King *James* the Firſt, when he ſat Deputy for the Clergy, and diſputed with the Puritans,

at

at the Conference at *Hampton-Court*, as became the Dignity of a great Prince. It was, indeed, the beſt which he could uſe; however he ſtrengthened and embelliſhed it with ſeveral Imperial Oaths, which he ſwore on that Occaſion, to the utter Confuſion of his Antagoniſts, and the great Triumph of the *genuine Clergy*, and the Archbiſhop; who beſtowed the Holy Ghoſt upon his Majeſty, for his Zeal, and Swearing on the Church's Side.

THIS ſtupid Saying has formerly filled our Priſons with Diſſenters, and chaſed many of them to *America*; and by this means weakened the Kingdom, and the Proteſtant Religion, to keep up good Neighbourhood between the Biſhops and the Prince. But they were neither the Biſhops, nor their Creatures, that reſtored King *Charles* the Second, but a Set of true-blue Presbyterians, who were rewarded for it with Gaols, Fines, and *Silent Sabbaths*.

LOYALTY is not confined to the Mitre. Biſhops have given more Diſturbance, and occaſioned more Diſtreſſes, to Prince and People, than any other Sort of Men upon Earth. This I can prove. Our own Biſhops, for near an hundred Years before the *Revolution*, were in every Scheme for promoting Tyranny and Bondage. On the other hand, our Diſſenters were

were very eminent Oppoſers of Arbitrary Power, and always lived peaceably under thoſe Princes who uſed them like Subjects. If they took up Arms when they were oppreſſed, Churchmen have done the ſame, and often without that Cauſe.

HAD it not been for Diſſenters, I queſtion whether we ſhould now have had either this Conſtitution, this King, or this Religion. It is well known, that a great Majority of our Churchmen aſſert Claims and Principles utterly irreconcileable to either. The moſt miſchievous Tenets of Popery are adopted and maintained, and the Ground upon which our Security and Succeſſion ſtand, is boldly undermined. It is dreadful and incredible, what a reprobate Spirit reigns amongſt the High Clergy.

THE Convocation have fallen fiercely upon thoſe who have fallen upon Popery and Jacobitiſm. And what a Popiſh, impious, and rebellious Spirit reigns at *Oxford*, they themſelves ſave me the Trouble of declaring. Diſaffection is promoted; open and black Perjury is juſtified; and it is held lawful to defy Almighty Vengeance for a Morſel of Bread. A Man's Conſcience is tried by an Oath, and he that can ſwallow any, has none.

BUT

BUT it is not enough to ſhipwreck their Souls for their Livings, nor to keep this helliſh Corruption at Home. As they practiſe, ſo they teach; and the ſpreading of their own Guilt, and the making others as bad as themſelves, (if Laymen can be ſo) is made the Duty of their Functions, and the Buſineſs of their Lives. Can Antichriſt do worſe? And are theſe Men, who walk in the Paths of Atheiſm and Perdition, fit to lead others to Holineſs and eternal Life?

* ONE of the greateſt Men of the laſt Age told King *WILLIAM*, That the Univerſities, if they continued upon the preſent Foot, would deſtroy him, or the Nation, or ſome of His Succeſſors. And they have ever ſince been endeavouring to make good his Words. That Prince was ſo thoroughly appriſed of the dangerous Genius and Principles of theſe two Bodies of Men, that he intended a Regulation, but, as it is ſaid, was prevented by the pernicious Advice of the late Duke of *S*———, who had at that Time gained the King's Confidence, and was at the Head of the Whigs, but was deſerting both, and making a Party with the Tories, as afterwards plainly enough appeared.

* *Mr.* LOCKE.

How

How far, and how faſt, theſe Seminaries have ſince then corrupted and inflamed the People, every body knows, and the Nation feels. Had it not been for them, we ſhould have lighter Taxes, and fewer Soldiers.

G.

NUMBER XLII.

Wedneſday, November 2. 1720.

Of High-Church ATHEISM.

THAT Religion, or the Worſhip of a Deity, is natural to Man, is confeſſed by Mr. *Hobbes* himſelf in his *Leviathan*, wherein he endeavours to aſſign the natural Cauſes thereof: And no Hiſtory or Voyages give us an Account of any Country, in any manner civilized, without Religion, as well as Prieſts or Miniſters, and Temples or Places of Worſhip. Men have been in all Ages ſo prone to Religion, that rather than not have one, they have been

been contented to worſhip the moſt abject beings in Nature; and indeed, nothing ſeems to have been too abſurd and ridiculous for them to believe and practiſe, under the Direction of any Men, who had Confidence enough to take upon them to be ſpiritual Guides of the People. It was ever ſufficient to pretend to ſuch Religion, to make any thing to be received as Religion.

Th' Egyptians *worſhipp'd Dogs, and for*
That Faith made internecine War.
Others ador'd a Rat, and ſome
For that Church ſuffer'd Martyrdom.
The Indians *fought for the Truth*
Of th' Elephant's and Monkey's Tooth.
But no Beaſt ever was ſo ſlight,
For Man, as for his God, to fight.
They have more Wit, alas! and know
Themſelves and us better than ſo.

HUDIBRAS.

NOR is this Diſpoſition at all abated in the World. The Pagan Part is much the ſame: and many Chriſtians are more prone, if poſſible, to Abſurdity and Folly, than the Pagans. The Popiſh, *Greek*, and ſeveral other Chriſtian Sects, worſhip a *Breaden God*; and, beſides their numerous Abſurdities and Follies, exceed

them in that grand one of all, *of delivering up their Persons, Estates, and Consciences, to the Priest; and of hating, damning, persecuting and burning one another, and all who have any Difference in Opinion with them, as he inspires them:* In all which they outgo both the ancient and modern Pagans, who have generally given Toleration to Men of different Religion from themselves, and have in no Place gone those Lengths in Persecution, which some Christians (or rather some Persons pretending to be Christians) have done.

As a farther Proof, that Religion is natural to Man, I observe, that no History informs us that ever *Atheism* (by which I understand, a direct Denial of the Existence of a Deity, Providence, and Worship) was able to introduce itself among the People of any Country whatsoever.

RELIGION is not only natural to Man, but esteemed necessary to Government by Princes and States, who, whether they themselves have believed any Religion or no, have established Forms of Religion, and been willing that their Subjects should obey them, and defend their Country, upon a Principle of Religion, knowing its powerful Operation on the Minds of Men.

A

AND beſides, Religion has a great Support om Prieſts or Divines, who are very nume- us every-where, and have a Zeal for every orm which they profeſs, equal to the Intereſt hich they derive from it: And if the Intereſt one Form runs low, many of them can ange their Party, and become zealous for other Religion; as they did three times in Compaſs of five Years in *England*, in the eigns of *Edward* the Sixth, *Mary*, and *Eli- beth*; the non-complying Clergy never ounting to Two hundred under any of thoſe anges.

GREAT Complaints indeed have been and daily made in relation to the mighty Growth *Atheiſm*. But thoſe Complaints ſeem to me, the moſt part, if not altogether, groundleſs, to be generally Calumnies of High-Church eſts, and High-Church Men, upon the beſt riſtians, namely, ſuch who profeſs themſelves dy to ſubmit to the Authority of Jeſus Chriſt, refuſe Submiſſion to any Prieſts, whether be *Greek*, *Muſcovite*, *Roman*, *Dutch*, *Scotch*, *Engliſh*.

THERE is not, therefore, and cannot be, Danger of the Overthrow of *Religion*, as as Men continue Men; Religion will ne- arily prevail among us, and every-where

elſe, in Virtue of Mens general Diſpoſition to Religion, either under one or ſeveral Forms, according as the Civil Magiſtrates of the World are more or leſs perſuaded, that they themſelves are to dictate (or to dictate after a Prieſt) Religion to their Subjects.

THE noiſy Outcry therefore of the Danger of Religion from *Atheiſm* or *Irreligion*, is a mere Chimera of the High Prieſts; which, in all Likelihood, they ſtart, to put Men on a falſe Scent, and to diſguiſe and carry on their own Deſigns of Power and Wealth: For while People are alarmed with the Fears of *Atheiſm*, they are diſpoſed to fall into all the pretended Meaſures of the Prieſt to ſuppreſs it, and to become zealous for him, who never fails to make uſe of the Panic or Madneſs of the People (which is his Opportunity) to eſtabliſh Doctrines and Practices for his own Advantage, which at his Suggeſtion they falſly ſuppoſe to be moſt oppoſite to *Atheiſm*, and to be the beſt Means to ſuppreſs it.

BUT the conſtant Danger, and the great and only Concern which we ought to have, is, leſt under the Colour and Name of *Religion*, or the Worſhip of God, we have not only Falſhood and Superſtition put upon us, but the moſt deteſtable and wicked Practices introduced

uch as tend to the Deſtruction of all Peace, oth public and private; all Virtue, Learn-g, and whatever is praiſeworthy among Men. his is *practical Atheiſm:* This is the Atheiſm be dreaded and feared: This is the Atheiſm hereof we are in Danger: This is the worſt onſequence we have to fear from *ſpeculative theiſm*; for no Man can ſay worſe of ſpecu-tive *Atheiſm*, than that it leads neceſſarily to Immorality: And in fine, this *Atheiſm* the rieſt has, in moſt Places of the World, in-oduced as Religion, to the utter Over-row of true Religion (which conſiſts chiefly, not ſolely, in ſuch Particulars as are for e Good of Society); for by making Men wic-ed out of Conſcience, and upon a Principle Religion, he as effectually deſtroys true Re-gion, as if he introduced ſpeculative *Atheiſm*. hat is it to a Believer in Chriſt, whether he perſecuted for his Religion by a *Papiſt*, ho does it religiouſly, and upon a Principle Conſcience; or by an *Atheiſt*, who does it ther to protect himſelf, or to get Credit in e World, or to ſhare with the Prieſt, in the dvantages ariſing from Perſecution? Do len ſuffer leſs by a Civil or Foreign War, be-un by Zealots, on a Principle of Religion, promote Religion; than if begun by *Athe-*

iſts, for the ſake of Ambition, Glory, Power, Rapine, or Murder? Are the Feuds, Animoſities, and Paſſions, ſtirred up by Prieſts on account of Religion, fewer, and leſs diſturbing of the public Peace, than thoſe of Men left to the Conduct of *Atheiſtical* Principles? Is it not equal to Husbands to be wronged by *Atheiſts*, who need no Pardon, as by *Popiſh Prieſts*, who can pardon one another; or by High-Church Men, who, notwithſtanding ſuch Actions, can be countenanced by the Prieſt, and merit greatly with him on account of their Zeal for the Church, that is, the Prieſt? Nay, is not the Danger of Cuckoldom equal from a *Popiſh Prieſt* (who, by his Power of Confeſſing and Abſolving the Woman, has ſo glorious an Opportunity) as from an *Atheiſt*? And would our High Prieſts, if they could get the Nation to be perſuaded, that they have the ſame Power of Confeſſing and Abſolving, (as they have of late been attempting to do in their Books and Sermons) be leſs Cuckold-makers than *Popiſh Prieſts* and *Atheiſts*?

COULD an *Atheiſt* be a greater Calumniator than Dr. *S*------*e*? Could an *Atheiſt* who thinks no Deference due to a Biſhop, have leſs Regard for the Honour of a Chriſtian

ſtian Biſhop than Dr. *S*--------*e*, who pre-tends to think Biſhops have Divine Authority? Could an *Atheiſt*, after he had been con-victed of Calumny, and forced to confeſs, that his Evidence for the Calumny failed him, be more hardened in Villainy, than to make no Satisfaction to, and ask no Par-don of, the Perſon injured; but perſiſt in ſuppoſing, that Time will diſcover his Charge to be true? Could a Set of *Atheiſts* have pa-tronized *Calumny* more, than to have called that Doctor to be the Head of their Society? And might they not, with equal Regard to Virtue and Religion, have choſen a Highwayman, or a Pick-pocket, who gives his Money for the Augmentation of poor Livings? Has a modern Biſhop more Satisfaction in being thus attacked by a High-Church Prieſt, ſupported and abetted by others, or is the Society leſs diſturbed by ſuch Proceedings, than if ſuch Prieſts were all *Atheiſts*?

LASTLY, Is it not equally deſtructive of Liberty and Property, for Eccleſiaſtics to uſe religious Cheats and Tricks to get Money from the People, towards raiſing and maintaining a needleſs Army of Black-coats, to live lazily in Monaſteries, and other Religious Houſes; as for *Atheiſts* to uſe any civil Tricks to main-

ain a needleſs ſtanding Army of Red-coats, for by their Arts to plunder the Public for any of their other Purpoſes?

THE Deſign therefore of ſome following Papers ſhall be to ſhew, how the High-Church Jacobite Clergy promote true *Atheiſm* and Irreligion: That the Laity may be put on the true Scent of *Atheiſm*: That they may have a juſt Dread of the true *Atheiſm*: That they may ceaſe to be *Atheiſts*, or Worſhippers of the Prieſt, and ceaſe to receive Religion on his Authority; and that they may return to God and Chriſt, the ſole Authors of all true Religion.

C.

NUMBER XLIII.

Wedneſday, November 9. 1720.

Of High-Church ATHEISM. *Part* 2.

I Proceed, as I promiſed in my laſt, to ſhew, by an Induction of Particulars, how the High-Chuch Prieſts promote *True Atheiſm* or *Irreligion*, by which I mean *Practical Atheiſm*.

I. AND firſt, I will begin with *Perjury*, or *Falſe Swearing*.

I WILL venture to lay it down as a Truth in Politics, that Oaths (or ſomething equivalent to them) are, on many Occaſions, neceſſary in Government; and that Peace among Neighbours, Puniſhment of Rogues, and the Settlement of Property, depend upon them. In the next Place, I will lay down as religious Truths, that an Oath is a ſolemn Act, both of natural

and revealed Religion; that Oaths to a Government are to be kept; that there is no greater Irreligion, no greater Affront to God, no greater Insincerity and Injustice to Man, than *Perjury*; and no Point of Religion, upon which the Honour of God, and the Welfare of Mankind, are more highly concerned, than in keeping Oaths; that Oaths of Allegiance to a Government intend Loyalty; that Oaths are to be taken in the Sense of the Imposers: that the Heart is to concur with the Lips in repeating them; that Men are to have no mental Reserves in taking Oaths; and that they must not design to break them, nor take them with Design to repent of them.

AND yet, on this Head, *Atheists* cannot be guilty of greater Irreligion, than some of our High-Church Men, (under the Conduct of our High-Church Priests) who sometimes are not for restraining our Kings by their Coronation-Oaths; and at other times, are not for restraining the People by their Oaths of Allegiance; that is, they are at one time for breaking Oaths, by contending for unlimited Power, and unlimited Obedience; and at another time for breaking Oaths, by retrenching the Authority of the Prince, and Allegiance of the Subject. Under this Reign, they are for the latter

ter Perjury; as appears by their open Rebellions; their irreverent Diſcourſes of the Perſon, and Family, of his Majeſty; their Endeavours to alienate from him the Hearts of his Subjects; and inſpiring the People with Diſaffection to his Government; their inventing and reporting defamatory Stories, to blemiſh his Character, and weaken his Authority; their rejoicing at any public Diſtractions; their taking Sides with the *French*, *Turks*, *Swedes* *Spaniards*, and *Muſcovites*, whenever any of theſe Nations are in Meaſures contrary to the Intereſt of his Majeſty; and laſtly, by the ridiculing and cracking Jeſts upon the State-Oaths, and citing, as a Sort of Scripture, theſe Verſes of *Hudibras:*

He that impoſes an Oath, makes it,
Not he that for Convenience takes it.
Then how can any Man be ſaid
To break an Oath he never made?

AND theſe Things are done by them, not after an Atheiſtical Manner, not under the Appearance of attacking and ridiculing Religion and Virtue, the Joys of Heaven, and the Fears of Hell; but almoſt as if Slander and Calumny, Treaſon and Sedition, were Articles of their Church, which they were in Duty obliged to

perform. They pretend all the while to
religious Men, good Churchmen; concern
for the Church's Safety; Enemies of falſe R
ligion, and particularly of Presbyterianiſm
and zealous for the Orthodox Faith, contain
in St. ATHANASIUS's Creed. And thou
the High-Church Prieſts have not as yet wr
ten any Books to defend this Manner of taki
and keeping Oaths; yet they take a Meth
no leſs effectual to recommend it: They n
only do not bear their Teſtimony againſt t
open Wickedneſs, this open practical *Atheiſ*
(as is their Duty) but are active themſelves
the ſame Practices, and countenance the Guil
by the Credit and Applauſe which they gi
them; and by the Diſtinction which they ſhe
towards them, recommending them as go
Churchmen, and reviling others, principall
for being faithful to the Oaths which they ha
taken to the Government. All which is mo
effectual to promote Perjury, than direct do
matizing in Behalf of it; for this ſly Way ge
them the Applauſe of many, and prevents th
Clamour of others againſt them; who wou
be generally deteſted, notwithſtanding the De
votion of the People towards them, if they open
defended Perjury.

Now

Now, pray, what is the Difference between theſe High-Church Men and *Atheiſts*? Can *Atheiſts* be leſs bound by Oaths? Can *Atheiſts* be worſe Subjects? Are not *Atheiſts* deteſtable, becauſe it is ſuppoſed, that they cannot be bound by Oaths? And are others leſs deteſtable, whom Oaths do not bind? Can any thing be ſaid worſe of *Atheiſts*, than what Mr. LESLEY ſays, (in his Anſwer to *King's State of the Proteſtants in* Ireland) that the *Parliament cannot make an Oath, which the Clergy will not take*? Had not King *GEORGE* Reaſon to apprehend as much Miſchief from his Swearing ---- Religious ---- Factious ---- Rebel---Church-Subjects, as he could have from Swearing-Rebel-*Atheiſts*! Was the Caſe of the Diſſenters, and other good Subjects, who were plundered before the Rebellion for their Loyalty, or ſuffered in the Rebellion, better for receiving ſuch Uſage from the Hands of High-Churchmen, than from *Atheiſts*? They are plainly as bad as *Atheiſts* can ever be ſuppoſed to be; worſe than *Atheiſts*, acting by the Principles of Eaſe and Self-preſervation, which may be ſuppoſed to be the moſt general Principles of Action in *Atheiſts*; and, in fine, worſe than any profligate Libertines that I ever met with in *Italy* itſelf, that Seat of High-Church-

Churchſhip; where I never heard even ſ
talk ſo irreligiouſly about Oaths, as I h
heard ſome High-Churchmen, or deliver ſ
open Perjury as Parſon *B----ſe*. What a
to the Wickedneſs and Guilt of theſe Hi
Churchmen, is, that they pretend to be C
ſtians, and to take their Religion from the N
Teſtament; that they are of a Church, wh
diſtinguiſhing Doctrine is Loyalty to
Prince, and which they extend ſo far, a
allow Reſiſtance in no Caſe to be lawful;
that they have a Sovereign, againſt whom
have nothing to object, but his Virtues,
mild, equal, impartial, and juſt Adminiſtra
of Government; for, as to his Title, (wh
is the beſt of Titles, even the voluntary E
bliſhment of a free People by an Act of t
Legiſlature) theſe ſwearing High-Churchm
can have no juſt Scruple.

THESE High-Churchmen therefore
true Atheiſts; they are practical *Athe*
The ſpeculative Difference between them
Atheiſts, is a Matter of ſmall Moment;
what is it to their Neighbours, while they
like Atheiſts, that they believe in God
Religion? For, while they act like Athe
they do all the Miſchief that Atheiſts can
and all thoſe Things for which alone *Athe*

is ſo juſtly deteſtable. For if ſpeculative Atheiſm did not lead Men to Immorality, to Faction, to Rebellion, &c. it would be ſo far from being deteſtable, that it would be preferable to any Religion that ſpoiled Mens Morals, and made them bad Subjects: And I would rather have a ſpeculative Atheiſt for my Neighbour and Fellow-Subject, and run the Hazard of his being a vicious Man, than an Orthodox-religious Man, whoſe Religion made him vicious.

C.

NUMBER XLIV.

Wedneſday, November 16. 1720.

Of High-Church ATHEISM. *Part*

THE next Article of *Atheiſm*, I charge upon High-Ch Prieſts and High-Church M ſhall relate to the very Bein Religion, and that is, *Toler of Religion*; for unleſs there be a *Toler of Religion*, Religion, which is a Matte Choice and Conſcience, is almoſt excluded World.

IT is aſſerted by Mr. *HOBBES*, tha Civil Magiſtrate of every Country is the L lator in Matters of Religion; that his S jects ought to obey him therein; and tha they do not, they ſhould be compelled Force to profeſs that Religion which he inj This Doctrine implies *Speculative Atheiſm*

it deſtroys *God's Dominion*, by ſubverting his Authority and Laws, and by making a God of the Magiſtrate; and as it roots out all Religion, by taking away Mens Right to follow their Conſciences therein; which conſtitutes the very Eſſence of Religion: And it muſt introduce *Practical Atheiſm*, if followed; by diſturbing, diſtreſſing, impriſoning, and taking away the Lives of the beſt Men; by ſetting Men at Variance with one another, and cauſing civil Wars on a religious Account; and by leaving Men to be governed only by the Laws of the civil Magiſtrate, and taking away all Motives to good Actions drawn from Conſcience towards God.

Now the Speculative Principles of High-Church Prieſts, and thoſe of Atheiſts, differ but little from each other: And the Practices following from both their Principles are the ſame; that is, the High-Church Prieſts muſt be no leſs *Practical Atheiſts*, than the *Speculative Atheiſts* themſelves.

1. FOR, Firſt, as to the *Speculative Principles* of High-Church Prieſts: Though the High-Church Prieſts contend for *a Law of God*, a *Bible*, and a *Conſcience*; yet they as effectually ſubvert thoſe good Things, as the *Atheiſts*, by aſſerting, at the ſame time, a Right

in

in the Civil Magiſtrate to compel Men by Laws, or Force, to embrace the true Religion. For, what is the Difference between a Right in the Magiſtrate to compel Men to embrace the true Religion, and a Right in the Magiſtrate to compel Men to embrace *his Religion* which he will always think the beſt and true Religion?

ALL the Arguments of High-Church Priests for Church-Authority, and the Church-Union imply the ſame *Atheiſm*. For, do they not therein contend for *Submiſſion to Man* in Matters of Religion, and for the Sacrifice of ſome Mens Conſciences to the Judgments of other Men? Which is ſubverting the *Law of God*, the *Bible*, and *Conſcience*, no leſs, than veſting the Power and Compulſion in the Civil Magiſtrate.

BUT their Arguments againſt all Innovations, in Matters of Religion, are moſt Atheiſtical. They contend ſo generally againſt Innovations, that they cite with Approbation *MAECENAS*'s Advice to *AUGUSTUS*, namely, Thaa he *ſhould follow conſtantly the Eſtabliſhed Religion of his Country; for all Innovations would foment Sedition in the State, and be a Means to ſubvert his Government.* Now though this Advice ſo manifeſtly aſſerts *Atheiſm*

iſm and *Hobbiſm*, and implies, that neither *AUGUSTUS*, in whoſe Reign our Bleſſed Saviour *CHRIST* was born, nor any other Pagan Prince, ought to permit Chriſtianity, which is the moſt pure and peaceable Religion, to become the *Eſtabliſhed Religion* of their *Country*; yet Dr. *Dawſon* has lately had the Confidence to lay it before the preſent Archbiſhop of *Canterbury* *; whoſe Conduct and Writings, before he was promoted to that See, gave not the Doctor the leaſt Ground to ſuſpect, that this worthy Prelate would approve ſuch *Atheiſm*, Irreligion, and *Antichriſtianiſm*; and no Man dares *ſay*, that they have done ſo ſince.

2. SECONDLY, The Practices following from the Principles of High-Church Prieſts, are the ſame with thoſe following from the Principles of *Atheiſm*. For, do not many Chriſtian Civil Magiſtrates exerciſe the Right aſſerted by High-Church Prieſts to belong to them, and fine, burn, impriſon, inflict corporal Puniſhments, take away Mens natural Rights, merely becauſe Men follow their Conſciences in what they are perſuaded is the Law of God? And what more can be done in virtue of any *Atheiſtical Principles*? Nor do

* *The late Dr.* WILLIAM WAKE.

the

the Notions of a *Bible*, a *Law of God*, and *Conſcience*, (however inconſiſtent ſuch Notions are with making penal Laws in Matters of Religion) render High-Churchmen leſs Perſecutors, than if they were acted by any Atheiſtical Principles; as is manifeſt from what is done in moſt Countries, where, in proportion to the Power and Influence of High-Church Prieſts, Degrees of Violence upon Mens Conſciences prevail. Nor do the Precepts of Chriſt, who requires all Men to *ſearch* the Scriptures, and to believe and live according to the Rules there laid down, and who never ſends Men to the Magiſtrate, or the eſtabliſhed Prieſts, for the underſtanding of the *Bible*, abate in the leaſt their perſecuting Zeal. Nor laſtly, does the moſt perfect Morality taught by CHRIST, who every-where inculcates *Love* of Mankind, *Forbearance*, (with Forgiveneſs even of many Immoralities) and univerſal *Charity*, and who has ſaid, *By this ſhall all Men know, that ye are my Diſciples, if ye love one another*; I ſay, even this heavenly Doctrine of his, does not reſtrain the High-Church Prieſt from ſtirring up in Mens Minds the utmoſt Hatred, Malice and Fury of Men againſt one another; which ſeem to learn little elſe from their Prieſts in matter of Religion, but the *Doctrine of Malice* againſt

againſt thoſe whom he diſlikes; which *Doctrine* they practiſe with ſuch Warmth and Zeal, as if it was the principal or only Article of Religion: And therein do more Miſchief, than Men acted by Atheiſtical Principles can be ſuppoſed to do; for *Atheiſm* is as incapable of making Men uncharitable to one another, on account of Religion, as it is inconſiſtent with true Religion to be uncharitable.

How theſe Atheiſtical Practices have prevailed in *England*, even ſince the *Reformation*, (for I will not mention the Times before, wherein this prieſtly Atheiſm was rampant) is apparent from our Hiſtory, which gives an Account of the burning, hanging, fining, impriſoning, ſtarving in Gaols, baniſhing, inflicting corporal Puniſhments, and haraſſing Thouſands of good and religious People, on the ſcore of Religion; upon which I crave leave to make theſe Obſervations:

1. FIRST, That as the High-Church Prieſts have been always moſt forward in making and defending penal Laws; ſo they have been the moſt barbarous and malicious in putting them in Execution, where they were intruſted with it, as is manifeſt from the Proceedings in the *Star-chamber*; where, under the Influence of Archbiſhop *LAUD*, and ſuch High

High Prieſts, exorbitant Fines, Slitting Noſe Cutting off Ears, Branding the Face with h Irons, ſevere Whipping, the Pillory, and In priſonment for Life in Dungeons, or in Plac either unwholſome, or remote from Friend were common Puniſhments; and ſometim all inflicted upon one Man. Upon pronounc ing one of theſe Sentences againſt *LEIG TON*, *LAUD* pulled off his Cap, and gav Thanks to God. But the Lay Part of th Court were merely prieſt-driven and outwitt by *LAUD* in ſuch Sentences: For when Knight moved one of the Lords about th Dreadfulneſs of the Sentence, intimating, th it opened a Gap to the Prelates to inflict ſuc diſgraceful Puniſhments and Tortures upo Men of Quality; that Lord replied, *'Twas h* in terrorem, *and that* he *would not have a one think, that the Sentence ſhould ever be ex cuted.* But that Lord (either judging of oth Men by himſelf, or perhaps joining in the Sen tence, upon a Promiſe from *LAUD*, that ſhould not be executed) found himſelf miſtake in *LAUD*, who, having long diveſted himſel of all *Lay Pity*, cauſed the Sentence to be ri gorouſly put in Execution.

2. SECONDLY, The Eccleſiaſtical Com miſſioners in the High-Commiſſion Court pu

the *Oath, Ex Officio,* upon thoſe brought before them on the ſcore of Religion; an *Oath* unjuſt in itſelf, as it obliges the Parties to anſwer all Interrogatories, and thereby made all honeſt Men, if guilty of any thing eſteemed a Fault, their own Accuſers; and an *Oath*, neither founded on Act of Parliament, nor on Common Law, in that Caſe. After what manner this uſurped Power of adminiſtring that Oath was exerciſed, you cannot have better expreſſed, than in the Words of the Lord Treaſurer *BURLEIGH* to Archbiſhop *WHITGIFT:* Your *Articles* are *ſo curiouſly penned, ſo full of Branches and Circumſtances, that the Inquiſitors of* Spain *uſe not ſo many Queſtions to comprehend and entrap their Preys.*

3. THIRDLY, I obſerve, that whenever the Parliament has been diſpoſed to introduce the Practice of our Saviour's *Doctrine of Love and Charity,* by repealing any penal and ſanguinary Laws, the High-Church Biſhops always oppoſed ſuch Repeal. In Proof whereof, I will give the Reader but one Inſtance, referring him to his own Obſervation for more Proofs in the Caſe. In 1677. when the Nation and Parliament were under great Apprehenſions from Popery, and a Popiſh Succeſſor,

and

and feared, leſt the *Law for burning Hereti*
would be ſoon put in Execution againſt Pro
ſtants, a Repeal of that *Law* was attempte
and ſucceeded: But it was oppoſed by the B
ſhops, who deſired that this *Law might contin*
in terrorem *to Fanatics*, though *God forb*
ſaid they, *that it ſhould ever be put in Exec*
tion! This Fact, and many others of t
ſame Kind, will ſoon be made more kno
by the late Biſhop of *Sarum's Hiſtory of*
Times.

4. FOURTHLY, I obſerve, that the Per
cutions ſince the *Reformation* have moſtly be
for arrant Trifles, and things of the leaſt I
portance to the World: We have been chie
plagued and ſet together by the Ears, abo
Caps, *Hoods*, *Surplices*, *Ceremonies*, *extern*
Forms, removing *Tables* from one Part o
Church to another, and *Railing* them in. B
the moſt extraordinary Subject of Perſecu
and Animoſities, and that ſeems peculiar to o
High-Church, was the *Book of Sports*. Hig
Church having taken a Fancy to make it Re
gion to have no Sermons on *Sundays* in t
Afternoon; but, inſtead thereof, to make t
People *dance* and *play*, in Oppoſition to P
ritans and *Diſſenters*, who, it ſeems, were
irreligious as to think, that they were obliged t
ſpe

ſpend their *Sundays*, after Divine Service was over, in Family or private Devotion: That Book was iſſued out by Authority; and many godly Clergymen were haraſſed for not reading it, as many Laymen were for not turning that *Holy Day* into a *Play Day*.

BUT, to the Glory of King *GEORGE*, this prieſtly Atheiſm of Perſecution is now vaniſhing. His Majeſty began his Reign with a noble Declaration for *Toleration*, wherein he allows his Subjects to have a Right to a Religion and a Conſcience. The Perſecution, commenced by a High-Church Prieſt againſt honeſt *WHISTON*, fell; and the Promoter is defeated of all Hopes of getting his Charges by a Biſhoprick. The Biſhop of *Bangor* * has preached up the Authority of *God* and *Chriſt* before his Majeſty; and his Majeſty (the Head of our Church, the ſupreme Ordinary, and the ſole Fountain of all Eccleſiaſtical, as well as Civil Authority) has preached it to the Nation. Some penal Laws have been repealed; wherein our truly Chriſtian Prelates had, their immortal Honour, their Share. Liberty of Examination and Debate (which is the moſt ſacred of all Principles, as it is the ſole foundation of all common Senſe, Truth, and

* Dr. BENJAMIN HOADLEY, *now Lord Biſhop of Winchester.*

true Chriſtianity) grows upon us. A
rity of Diſſenting Miniſters, aſſembled in
nod, have declared for the *Bible*; which
never before done by any Synod of P
who have always endeavoured to eſtabliſh
own or ſome other Human Authority.
High Prieſts dare not plainly excite the M
burn, plunder, and moleſt their Neigh
but are in great meaſure reduced to
and private Railing and Damning. T
Perſecution now on Foot, and counte
by Authority, is, *That High-Church*
perſecute Diſſenters; for it is eſteemed b
a *Church Perſecution* not to be able to pe
others. And laſtly, I dare write the *Inde*
Whig.

O GLORIOUS King *George!* O the
neſs of a Nation to be governed by ſuch
narch! Of whom I cannot but obſerv
he ſeems to me the Favourite of H
which ſo bleſſes all his Deſigns with S
that he need not fear Succeſs in any tru
tuous or religious Deſigns. And (that
uſe the printed Words of Mr. *BOL*
excellent Divine of our Church) "I
"ſmall Encouragement to all, who
"any Acquaintance with the Chriſtian
"gion, to reſt aſſured, that God will,
"

" Time, notwithſtanding all the Machina-
" tions and Efforts of ill People, bring Mat-
" ters in this Land to an happy Iſſue, becauſe
" none are againſt the Government of our
" moſt Excellent Sovereign King *GEORGE*,
" and the Proteſtant Succeſſion, but who are
" alſo againſt the Lord JESUS CHRIST being
" ſole King in his own Kingdom, and con-
" ſequently againſt his being ſole Law-giver
" to, and Judge of, his own Subjects, in Mat-
" ters of Conſcience, and which relate to
" their eternal Salvation."

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NUMBER XLV.

Wedneſday, November 23. 1720.

Of High-Church ATHEISM. *Part*

AS a further Proof of the Charge Practical Atheiſm upon H Church Prieſts, I proceed to ſh how they confound and ſub all Morality and Holineſs of Life; whic the main Deſign of all Religion, and more ticularly of the Chriſtian.

1. THIS they do in the firſt Place, teaching the moſt immoral and unholy D trines, and thereby leading Men to Acti in the higheſt Degree, prejudicial to hu Society.

TO *do as we would be done unto*, and *love our Neighbour as ourſelves*, are Moral Chriſtian Principles, of daily and moſt ge Uſe. We cannot converſe a Moment, w

acting agreeably or contrary to them: the Happineſs of Society conſiſts, in great meaſure, in the Practice of thoſe Duties; as the Miſery of Society conſiſts in their Breach. For what is Happineſs in Society, but the Prevalency of univerſal Love, and equal Favour and Juſtice? And what greater Degree of Love can we ſhew to others, than that Love wherewith we love ourſelves? And what can a whole Society wiſh for more, than that equal Favour and Juſtice be diſtributed among them? And what is Miſery in Society, but Malice, and Hatred, and Partiality; and their Conſequences, Diſorder, Confuſion, and War?

Now the High Prieſt dogmatizes againſt theſe fundamental Maxims of Morality, whenever he contends againſt the Right of Men to judge for themſelves in Religion, which he pretends to uſe himſelf; whenever he contends for Penalties or Diſcouragements of any Kind, againſt thoſe who differ in Opinion from him, which he would not at the ſame time think juſt to have inflicted on himſelf for differing in Opinion from them; whenever he damns Men as Heretics and Schiſmatics, in Caſes wherein he would not damn himſelf; whenever he judges whole Sects or Bodies of Men inſincere, (as is his conſtant Method towards Diſſenters)

and would not at the ſame time be thought a ſincere himſelf; and in fine, whenever he preaches contrary to that Love of all Men, that Forbearance, that Forgiveneſs of Injuries, that Meekneſs, that Peace and Quiet, that Be-neficence to all in Diſtreſs, and that Charity (the greateſt of Moral and Chriſtian Virtues) which *beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things*, which is the Charity taught in the Goſpel: All which he cannot but be willing to ſee prevail in the World, with reſpect to himſelf. How often the High Prieſt preaches after this manner, or rather how ſeldom he preaches otherwiſe, and how ſucceſsful he is in introducing the *Practical Atheiſm* ſuited to ſuch Doctrines, namely, Factions, Quarrels, Violence, Injuſtice, Plundering, Partiality, Devaſtation, and Murder, every Obſerver may be ſatisfied by his own Experience.

REBELLION is the actual Diſſolution of Order in a Society; and is ever founded either on the Jealouſies and ill-grounded Animoſities of the People in relation to their Sovereign, or to one another; or on ſuppoſed Defect of Title in the Sovereign. Now theſe our High-Church Prieſts promote and inculcate, by their conſtant Lectures of Church Peril; of the ſaid

State

State of the preſent Times, beyond all that ever were before them; of their own Want of Power; of Paſſive Obedience, and Hereditary Right; and ſeveral other favourite factious Subjects: and this way they lead the People to Rebellion; and that in Breach of Oaths, which are the moſt ſacred Band of Society.

AND as the High Jacobite Prieſt thus teaches the very worſt Vices, ſo nothing recommends a Layman to him ſo much as the Practice of them.

2. SECONDLY, The High-Church Prieſt ſubverts Morality and Holineſs of Life, by laying an undue Streſs on Matters of little or no Importance; and thereby engages the Thoughts and Affections of Men about them, to the Neglect of Morality, and that Holineſs of Life, which is the End and Deſign of all Religion. For whoever places Religion in Trifles, will (like the *Jews*, who were much concerned to pay to the Prieſt Tythe of Mint, Aniſe, and Cumin) *neglect the weightier Matters of the Law.*

WHAT Work have we in *England*; what Hatred, Damning, and Uncharitableneſs is there among us, about mere Ceremonies, and external Forms? And what Arguing and Zeal is there for impoſing them; when a general

Agreement in them (as it would be manage would be ſo far from being of any real Uſe Religion, and tending to Peace, that it wou be a Conſpiracy againſt the Rights of Mankin and againſt that Peace and Charity, whi would otherwiſe prevail? For have not M a Right to follow their Judgments in Matters Religion, and eſpecially in ſuch Matters as allowed to be indifferent in themſelves; and not that Right invaded by impoſing them And would not Peace and Charity (which, ſee, exiſt not under Impoſition) prevail, allowing Men to practiſe as differently as th Judgments direct them; as we ſee they do p vail in Countries of Liberty and Tolera in proportion to the Degree of Liberty and T leration allowed?

WHAT Work is there at this Time, h many Volumes are there daily publiſhed, a how deeply concerned is all *England*, abo certain Speculations, whereof the People d underſtand nothing, and about which the Pri confounds himſelf? Can the People underſta any of the various Schemes and Hypotheſes i vented by Divines, in relation to the Trini in Unity, and the Incarnation of God? De Dr. *Waterland*, who is a very learned, acu and ingenious Perſon, and has writ two gre

Book

Books on this Subject, know what he contends for himself, when he expresses the Sum of his Doctrine of the *Trinity in Unity*, in these Words, "That each Divine Person is an "individual intelligent Agent: But, as sub-"sisting in one undivided Substance, they are "all together, in that respect, but one undi-"vided intelligent Agent?" That is, One Individual is Three Individuals, One undivided Agent is Three undivided Agents, and One Person is Three Persons? And can any Mortal suppose the People to be in the least concerned about such sophistical Chimeras, crabbed Notions, bombastic Phrases and Solecisms? And must not Zeal about Ceremonies, and unintelligible Speculations, as much supplant and take the place of Morality, as ever *Rites* did among the *Jews*, or the religious Trumpery of the *Pagans* did among them? Even Zeal for Truth in certain Points, is not of such Importance as is commonly supposed. I have been much pleased with the Judiciousness and Charity of the following Passage in a Sermon of the present Archbishop of *Dublin*, the most worthy and truly profound Dr. *King*: "Let "us suppose one, who takes all the Descrip-"tions we have of God in *Scripture* literally; "who imagines him to be a mighty King,

" that ſits in Heaven, and has the Earth for
" his Footſtool; that at the ſame Time has
" all Things in his View which can happen;
" that has Thouſands and Thouſands of Mi-
" niſters to attend him, all ready to obey and
" execute his Commands; that has great Love
" and Favour for ſuch as diligently obey his
" Orders, and is in a Rage and Fury against
" the Diſobedient: Could any one doubt but
" he, who in the Simplicity of his Heart ſhould
" believe theſe Things as literally repreſented,
" would be ſaved by virtue of that Belief; or
" that he would not have Motives ſtrong
" enough to oblige him to love, honour, and
" worſhip God? The Imperfections of ſuch
" Repreſentations will never be imputed to us
" as a Fault, provided we do not wilfully dis-
" honour him by unworthy Notions, and our
" Conceptions of him be ſuch as may ſuffi-
" ciently oblige us to perform the Duties he
" requires at our Hands." The like may be
ſaid of a Man who has miſtaken Notions of the
Trinity in Unity, and of the Perſon of Chriſt,
provided he do not *wilfully* diſhonour God and
Chriſt by his Notions, and do *conceive* Chriſt
to be a Legiſlator, and a Ruler ſent from God,
than which *Conception*, nothing can more ob-
lige

ge us to perform the Duties, that both God nd Chriſt require of us.

3. THIRDLY, There is no Crime, but what has, at Times, and on certain Occaſions, he Support and Encouragement of the Popiſh Prieſt; as there is no Virtue which he does not t Times, and on certain Occaſions, diſcou-age. Let a Man be Whoremaſter, or Drunk-rd, or Lyar, or Slanderer, or Paſſionate, or Revengeful, or Cheat; and he may meet with fair Quarter from the High Prieſt, be ſeldom or never reproved by him, have his Eſteem and Countenance, and the Character of a good Churchman from him, and be ſure of prieſtly Abſolution at laſt; provided he heartily eſpouſe the Intereſt of the Prieſt, that is, contend for his Power and Wealth. On the other Side, let a Man have ever ſo many virtuous Qualities, and let him alſo be a ſincere Believer in Jeſus Chriſt; but without the Quality of eſpouſing the High Popiſh Prieſt's Intereſt; and he will never ſtand ſo fair in the Prieſt's Eyes as the aforeſaid Profligate-Good-Churchman. This Conduct of the Prieſts has a mighty Influence on the Actions of Men, and tends to make them as bad as their Inclinations and Temper diſpoſe them to be; inaſmuch as the general Eſteem and good Name of moſt

Men will depend on the Characters given of them by the Prieſts, who are the general Goſſips, and are reverenced every-where for their inward Sanctity, their external long Gowns, and broad-brimmed Hats, the latter ſufficiently manifeſting the former. I will not deny, but that the Prieſts had much rather, that their Followers were virtuous than otherwiſe; ſince they muſt well know, that Credit is to be got by having ſuch Men among them, and that the beſt Harveſt is to be made of the Weakneſs and Superſtition of virtuous Men. But the Bulk of Men being vicious, and the virtuous Man of Senſe being in the Intereſt of Religion, and againſt Prieſtcraft; the aforeſaid High Prieſts are reduced to the Neceſſity of countenancing the Vicious, to carry on their own Intereſt with a ſufficient Party.

4. FOURTHLY, High-Church Prieſts, by the Weakneſs of all Popiſh States, (except the Commonwealths of *Venice* and *Norica*) and of moſt of the Proteſtant States, are let into too great a Share of the Civil Governments of *Europe*; and thus, by becoming *acting Politicians*, confound all national, public, and political Morality. For, as the late Biſhop of *Sarum* obſerved, "The Prieſts have a Secret to make "the Natives of *a Country* miſerable, in Spite "of

" of any Abundance with which Nature has " furniſhed them. They have not Souls big " enough, and tender enough, for Govern- " ment: They have both a Narrowneſs of " Spirit, and a Sourneſs of Mind, that does not " agree with the Principles of human Soci- " ety. Nor have they thoſe Compaſſions for " the Miſerable, with which wiſe *Governors* " ought to temper all their Counſels; for a " ſtern Sourneſs of Temper, and an unrelent- " ing Hardneſs of Heart, ſeem to belong to " that Sort of Men."

C.

NUMBER

NUMBER XLVI.

Wedneſday, November 30. 1720.

Of High-Church ATHEISM. *Part* 5.

SPECULATIVE Atheiſts exiſt but in few Places, and have never been numerous any-where; even though all thoſe be accounted ſuch, upon whom Atheiſm has ever been charged. But where they do exiſt, they ſeem to me to owe their Riſe principally to Superſtition and Prieſtcraft; and the higher the Church and Prieſts have been, the more numerous have been the Atheiſts: Nay, there ſeems to me more juſt Cauſe to ſuſpect the High-Church Prieſts of Atheiſm, than any other Men.

1. WHOEVER reaſons himſelf into Atheiſm, undoubtedly reaſons very wrong, and either proceeds on falſe Principles, or makes wrong Concluſions from true ones. But among the ſeveral falſe Arguments, by which the Atheiſts and

and looſe People impoſe on themſelves, and endeavour to ſeduce others; there is none more frequently urged, than that the current Abſurdities and Superſtitions taught by Prieſts, and the Prieſts Hypocriſy and Villainies, are ſufficient Reaſons to make all Religion be deemed a Cheat, and *Prieſts of all Religions to be deemed the ſame.* The Poet ſays, in the Perſon of a Libertine,

——— *We know their holy Jugglings,*
Things that would ſtartle Faith, and make us deem,
Not This, or That, but all Religions falſe.

THIS indeed is pitiful Reaſoning, and ought to be extended no farther than to thoſe Doctrines and Prieſts, againſt whom the Objections lie. But ſo it is Men reaſon; and Experience will prove, that 'tis the High-Church Prieſt, and his Proceedings, which make the Atheiſt. But before I proceed to that Experience, I will ſay this in Behalf of this Argument for *Atheiſm*, that the Evil apparent in the World (which ſome urge as an Argument againſt the Exiſtence of a Deity) ſeems to me moſt viſible in the Actions of Prieſts, who do, in my Opinion, create the greateſt Diſorder among Men.

THE

THE late Biſhop of *Sarum* tells us, in his Travels, "That a Man of Quality at *Rome*, "and an eminent Churchman, *ſaid to him*, "That it was a horrible Scandal to the whole "Chriſtian World, and made one doubt of "the Truth of the Chriſtian Religion, to ſee "more Oppreſſion and Cruelty in their Ter-"ritories, than was to be found even in *Tur-"key*. *He ſays*, ſome Phyſicians in *Naples* "are brought under the Scandal of Atheiſm: "And it is certain, that in *Italy* Men of ſearch-"ing Underſtandings, who have no other "Idea of the Chriſtian Religion, but that "which they ſee received among them, are "very naturally tempted to disbelieve it quite; "for they believing it all alike in groſs, with-"out Diſtinction, and finding ſuch notorious "Cheats as appear in many Parts of their Re-"ligion, are, upon that, induced to disbe-"lieve the Whole." And it is an Obſerva-tion of Dr. *GEDDES*, that *there are more People of no Religion in* Italy, *than in all the World beſides* (Tracts, Vol. 3.). *England* is alſo ſaid, by our High-Church Prieſts, to abound with Atheiſts, no leſs than *Italy*. But if there be ſuch People among us, they are intirely owing to the Conduct of ſome of our Prieſts, who, I will be ſo bold as to affirm, are as *im-*

pudent

pudent in their Pretences to Power and Authority, as the *Italian* Prieſts dare to be. This, though at firſt Sight it may ſeem matter of Admiration, that they ſhould be ſo in ſuch an enlightened Country as *England*, where ſo many underſtand right Reaſoning, and true Chriſtianity; yet is natural enough, if it be conſidered, that it is the *laſt Struggle* of Prieſts for *Popery* and *Slavery*: They contend for the moſt ridiculous Things, as neceſſary to Salvation; and by their Prevarications about Oaths, and Shiftings about Doctrines, according to their Intereſt, diſpoſe Men to make the ſame Inference, as the *Men of Quality*, and *Men of ſearching Underſtandings*, do in *Italy*. And ſome among us may, perhaps, make that Atheiſtical Inference, conſidering how the Nation had been managed in the High-Church Reign of King *CHARLES* the Second, when the *Deſign*, according to the late Biſhop of *Sarum*, *ſeemed to be to make us firſt Atheiſts, that we might more eaſily be Papiſts.*

DR. *HICKES* tells us, that the Practices of the *Swearing Clergy*, ſince the *Revolution*, who had preached Paſſive Obedience before, "have "tempted looſe and unprincipled Men to turn "Atheiſts; *and that thoſe Clergy have* ſet "open the Flood-Gates to that Deluge of

"Atheiſm

" Atheiſm and Impiety, that *now* overflow the " Nation." And he cites another Author with Approbation, for ſaying, " This Change " has made many ſober Men ſceptical, and " gone farther towards eradicating all the No- " tions of a Deity, than all the Labours of " Mr. *HOBBES.* I have been ready to ſu- " ſpect, that Religion itſelf was a Cheat; and " others, of my own Knowledge, have the " ſame Temptations to queſtion Religion it- " ſelf."

MR. *Leſley* ſays, " The Carriage of the " Clergy in the *Revolution*, has given greater " Occaſion to the ENEMIES OF THE LORD " TO BLASPHEME, and turned more Men " from the Church of *England*, to the Church " of *Rome*, and EVEN TO ATHEISM; has " overturned, ruined, divided, and diſhonour- " ed our Church more, than if that Perſecu- " tion, which ſome feared or pretended, had " fallen upon them. He ſays, The Clergy " banter and mock God to his Face; and " that Atheiſm is a ſmaller Sin than this, ſince " it is better to have no God at all, than to " ſet up one, to laugh at him; and that the " greateſt Danger to which we are now ex- " poſed, by the Defect of ſo many of our " Clergy, is a Contempt of all Religion,

" which

" which is now ſpread over the Land, in a " Manner unheard of in former Ages."

LASTLY, The late Biſhop of *Sarum* tells us, " That ſince his Converſation with *Wil-* " *mot* Earl of *Rocheſter*, he had had many " Occaſions to diſcourſe with People tainted " with wicked Principles: And, *ſays he*, I do " affirm, that the greateſt Prejudice thoſe Per- " ſons have at Religion, at the Clergy, and at " the public Worſhip of God, is this, That " they ſay they ſee Clergymen take Oaths, " and uſe all Prayers, both ordinary and ex- " traordinary, for the Government; and yet " in their Actings and Diſcourſes, and of late " in their Sermons, they ſhew viſibly, that " they look another Way; from whence they " conclude, that they are a mercenary Sort of " People, without Conſcience."

2. ATHEISM being, in my Opinion, a moſt unnatural Thing, and a Crime, which, for its Madneſs, as well as Guilt, ought to ſhut a Man out of civil Society, I am not diſpoſed to lay it to any Man's Charge, though a vicious Perſon; much leſs to any ſober Man's, without his open Profeſſion of it, or an evident Proof of it upon him. But if, conſiſtently with Charity, we may ſuſpect any Men of Atheiſm, who deny themſelves to be Atheiſts, we may certainly

tainly ſuſpect ſuch Prieſts, who live viciouſly; who play with Oaths; who, though ſwearing to the Government, are *Jacobites* in their Hearts (as Dr. *Hickes* ſays, I hope falſely, *the main Body of the Clergy, God be thanked*, are); who are uncharitable in their Cenſures, and are Perſecutors; who defend plain Abſurdities; who diſpute againſt the Reaſonableneſs of Reaſon; who contend for human Authority, that is, their own, in Matters of Religion; and argue for the Belief of unintelligible Propoſitions or Myſteries (For Men of common Senſe, and common Honeſty, can hardly be ſuppoſed to join real Belief and ſuch Things together). And above all, thoſe Prieſts are to be ſuſpected as Atheiſts, who are conſtantly charging others with Atheiſm, and thoſe oftentimes the moſt learned, beſt, and moſt religious Men, as *Cudworth*, *Tillotſon*, and *Locke*. Upon ſuch we may juſtly return the Charge of Atheiſm, in the Words of a modern Philoſopher: "How, "*ſays he to a High Presbyterian Prieſt*, could "you think me an Atheiſt, unleſs it were, be- "cauſe finding your Doubts of the Deity more "frequent than other Mens are, you are there- "by the apter to fall upon that kind of Re- "proach? Wherein you are like Women of "poor and evil Education, when they ſcold;

"amongſt

" amongſt whom the readieſt diſgraceful Word " is *Whore*. Why not Thief, or any other " ill Name, but becauſe, when they remember " themſelves, they think that Reproach the " likelieſt to be true?"

AND, as many Prieſts give ſuch Cauſe of Suſpicion, ſo I would fain know what Mr. *LESLEY* muſt eſteem the Prieſts of our Church to be, when he ſays, " That the Par- " liament cannot make an Oath which the " Clergy will not take? And whether many " of our Clergy muſt not be eſteemed *Atheiſts*, " according to the Saying of the late Biſhop " of *Worceſter*, It was a great Providence of " God, that ſo many of the Clergy refuſed the " Oaths to the Government, leſt People ſhould " think there was no ſuch thing as Religion, " and incline to Atheiſm?" And laſtly, wha can be thought of the Majority of a Lower Houſe of *Convocation*, who, in their *Repreſentation of the preſent State of Religion, with regard to the late exceſſive Growth of Infidelity, Hereſy, and Profaneneſs*, fell upon the truly religious (though erroneous) Books of Mr. *Whiſton* and others, but paſſed over the *Tale of a Tub*, a Book of a Reverend Brother; tho' that Book was the ſole open Attack that had been made upon Chriſtianity ſince the *Revolu-*

tion,

tion, except the *Oracles of Reaſon*; and was not inferior, in Banter and Malice, to the Attacks of *CELSUS*, or *JULIAN*, or *PORPHYRY*, or *LUCIAN!* And what can we think of the Majority of another Convocation, which a worthy Member ſpoke to in theſe Words? "With what Face or Conſcience, Mr. Prolocutor, can we offer to complain of the Licentiouſneſs taken by Lay-Writers, and yet connive at the like Offences given by the Miniſters of our Church; I doubt, greater Offences? For if all the ill Books againſt Religion, Scripture, *&c.* were here packed up together, I would undertake to pick out the worſt of them, by pointing at thoſe written by Clergymen, even of the moſt profane Drollery, as well as the moſt ſerious Hereſy?" So that, upon the Whole, the High-Church Prieſts ſeem to me to derive a mighty Benefit from Atheiſm. They have it chiefly among themſelves, and protect one another in it, and thereby have the Profit of Atheiſm, ariſing from taking falſe Oaths, and from doing many things without Scruple of Conſcience, as alſo the Pleaſure, as ſome of them eſteem it, (ſee Dr. *Atterbury's* Sermon at *Bennet's* Funeral) ariſing from the Practice of Vice. And at the ſame time they themſelves ſtand clear of

of the Imputation of Atheiſm, and brand with it thoſe whom they do not like, and ſuch as are oftentimes the beſt Men, and beſt Chriſtians.

C.

P. S. The Author of this Paper, having received two very modeſt and religious, though anonymous Letters, which take Offence at an Expreſſion in the *Independent Whig*, N°. XXXVIII. about Godly Sorrow, returns for Anſwer, That *Sorrow for our Sins* is not there oppoſed, but *mechanic Sorrow*, and ſuch as proceeds from wrong Cauſes; and the Author only ſuppoſes, that ſuch enthuſiaſtic People, as he has before mentioned, knew not the true Principles of Repentance, which he himſelf has deſcribed.

IN fine, as to *Godly Sorrow*, *Sorrow for Sin*; I know it to be ſo much a religious Duty, that I know there can be no Religion without it.

NUMBER XLVII.

Wedneſday, December 7. 1720.

No PRIESTS *inſtituted by the* Chriſtian Religion.

I WILL, in this Paper, ſhew, that there are no Prieſts or Sacrificers in the Goſpel Diſpenſation, in any other Senſe, than as every Chriſtian may be called ſo, as he offers up to God the Sacrifices of Praiſes and Thankſgivings, and a pure and contrite Heart: and, in this reſpect, St. *Peter* calls all Chriſtians, *a ſpiritual Houſe, an holy Prieſthood, to offer up ſpiritual Sacrifices, a choſen Generation, a Royal Prieſthood, an holy Nation, a peculiar People, God's Heritage*, or more properly, *God's Clergy*.

IT is undoubtedly true, that all Power, Superiority, or Diſtinction amongſt Men, muſt be derived either from the poſitive Inſtitutions of

of God, or the Conſent and Agreement of one another; and therefore, whoever demands any Authority over others, their Goods, or Poſſeſſions, muſt ſupport his Pretences by ſuch Proof as the Nature and Importance of the Claim requires; and it muſt be very glaring and undeniable, when it is levelled at the temporal and eternal Happineſs of all Mankind.

IT is a ſevere Circumſtance, which attends thoſe, who oppoſe received Opinions, that they muſt not only contend againſt popular Prejudices, and Notions long imbibed, againſt the Intereſts and Paſſions of great Numbers of artful and combining Men, but in moſt Countries againſt the Weight and Force of public Authority. The labouring Oar too will always lie upon you: You muſt diſprove what has no Proof to ſupport it, and bring Clouds of Arguments to maintain Propoſitions that are really ſelf-evident; a bare Poſſibility that you may be miſtaken, ſhall be deemed a full Conviction; and ſometimes the cleareſt Demonſtration on your Side, ſhall be called only carnal and human Knowledge, not to be uſed about Spiritual Things; and even when the irrefragable Strength of your Reaſoning forces Conſent, you will have no Thanks for your Pains, but will be eſteemed officious and

factious, and be ſaid to diſturb Points alre
ſettled, if by chance you ſhould eſcape
Cenſure of promoting the Cauſe of Deiſm
Atheiſm.

HOWEVER, theſe Claims, in the Popiſh
popiſhly-affected Clergy, are ſo enormous,
Conſequences of them ſo fatal to Chriſtian
and the Arguments pretended to be bro
from Reaſon and Authority for their Supp
ſo weak and contemptible, the whole De
and current of the Goſpel being dire
againſt them; that I ſhall do my utmoſt
ly to demoliſh and throw down the tott
Building, and ſhew that it has no Foundati
common Senſe or Scripture.

NO Propoſition can be more evident,
that, before any poſitive Inſtitution, every
muſt have been his own Prieſt, and alone
have offered up his own Prayers and Th
givings; but when God Almighty inſti
the *Jewiſh Diſpenſation*, which conſiſte
numerous Rites, Ceremonies, and Sacri
he alſo appointed Perſons to officiate and
cute theſe Duties for the People as well a
themſelves, who were called *Prieſts* or *S*
ficers, with particular Salaries or Dues ann
to their Office, and they were to be only ch
out of one Tribe.

ACCORDINGLY, in the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, chap. v. ver. 1. and chap. viii. ver. 3. a High-Prieſt is defined *as one taken up from amongſt Men, and ordained for Men in Things pertaining to God; that he may offer Gifts and Sacrifices for Sins:* So that the Buſineſs of the Prieſthood was for expiating Sin, and reconciling Men to God, by offering Gifts and Sacrifices: And the Apoſtle adds, *Verſe the 4th, That no Man could take this Honour to himſelf, but he which was called of God, as was* Aaron, whoſe Commiſſion was couched in the plaineſt and moſt expreſs Words imaginable, and the People's Duty and Obedience were preſcribed even to the minuteſt Circumſtance.

As the *Jewiſh* Rites and Ceremonies were almoſt endleſs, and conſiſted of ſo many minute Particulars, that it was next to impoſſible not to commit ſome Breaches of their Law; therefore God appointed Atonement to be made for the leſſer Tranſgreſſions of it, by Gifts and Offerings, and the Perſons aforeſaid to make thoſe Offerings; but for the greater Sins, ſuch as Idolatry, Perjury, Murder, Adultery, breaking their Sabbath, *&c.* no Gift-Offerings or expiatory Sacrifices were allowed; and for this Reaſon the Apoſtle,

chap. vii. *v.* 18, 19. argues, *that there is* ver
a Diſannulment of the Commandment going bef
for the Weakneſs and Unprofitableneſs there
for the Law made nothing perfect, but the bri
ing in a better Hope did, by the which we dr
nigh unto God.

HE adds, *chap.* ix. *v.* 9. *That Gifts a*
Sacrifices could not make him that did the ſe
vice perfect, as pertaining to the Conſcien
And *chap.* x. *v.* 4. *That it is not poſſible, th*
the Blood of Bulls and of Goats ſhould take aw
Sins. And *v.* 6, 8. *That in Burnt-Offer*
and Sacrifices for Sins, God has no Pleaſu
and he argues from thence, *chap.* v. *v.* 4,
and *chap.* vii. from the 11th *v.* to the 19th
Neceſſity *that another Prieſt ſhould ariſe a*
the Order of Melchiſedek, which was an hig
Order, *and that he ſhould be perfect* (*being*
become Author of eternal Salvation to all th
who obey him): *for if Perfection* was in
Levitical Prieſthood, (*under which the Pe*
received the Law) *what Need* was th
that another Prieſt ſhould ariſe after the Or
of Melchiſedek, and not after the Order
Aaron? For the Prieſthood being changed, th
is made a Neceſſity of the Change alſo of
Law.

A

AND then he obſerves many Differences between our Saviour's and the *Jewiſh* Prieſthood:

1. THAT *this Prieſt was not made after the Law of a carnal Commandment, but after the Power of an endleſs Life.*

2. THAT *he was made a Prieſt, not without an Oath, which the Jewiſh Prieſts were not,* v. 20, 21.

3. THAT *they were many Prieſts, becauſe they were not ſuffered to continue, by reaſon of Death; but this Man, becauſe he continueth, hath an unchangeable Prieſthood: Wherefore he is able to ſave them to the utmoſt, that come unto God by him, ſeeing he ever liveth to make Interceſſion for them,* v. 23, 24, 25.

4. THAT *the Law maketh Men High-Prieſts which have Infirmity; but ſuch a High-Prieſt became us, who is holy, harmleſs, undefiled, ſeparate from Sinners, and made higher than the Heavens, who needeth not daily to offer up Sacrifices, firſt for his own Sins, and then for the People; for this he did once, when he offered up himſelf,* v. 26, 27, 28.

5. THAT *he obtained a more excellent Miniſtry, by how much he is Mediator of a better Covenant, which was eſtabliſhed upon better Promiſes; for if the Covenant had been faultleſs,*

leſs, then ſhould no Place have been ſought for the ſecond; for finding Fault with them, ſaith the Lord, I will put my Laws into their Mind and write them in their Hearts, and they ſhall not teach every Man his Neighbour, ſaying, Know the Lord; for all ſhall know me from the greateſt to the leaſt; for I will be merciful to their Unrighteouſneſs, and their Sins and Iniquities I will remember no more; in that he ſaith, By a new Covenant, he hath made the firſt old; and that which decayeth, and waxeth old, is ready to vaniſh away, chap. viii. ver. 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13. and chap. x. ver. 16, 17.

6. IN *chap.* ix. the Apoſtle compares the Rites and bloody Sacrifices of the Law, and ſhews how far inferior they are to the Blood and Sacrifice of Chriſt, *who not by the Blood of Goats and Calves, but by his own Blood, entered at once into the holy Place, having obtained eternal Redemption for us; for if the Blood of Bulls and of Goats, and the Aſhes of an Heifer ſprinkling the Unclean, ſanctifieth to the purifying of the Fleſh, how much more ſhall the Blood of Chriſt, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himſelf, without Blot, to God, purge your Conſciences from dead Works, to ſerve the living God?* ver. 12, 13, 14.

7. Is

7. IN *chap.* x. he ſhews the Weakneſs of the Law-Sacrifices; *which, being offer'd up Year by Year continually, could not make the Comers thereto perfect; for then they would have ceaſed to have been offered, becauſe that the Worſhippers, once purged, ſhould have had no more Conſcience of Sins.* Ver. 1, 2. *Then ſaid he, Lo, I come to do thy Will, O God. He taketh away the firſt, that he may eſtabliſh the ſecond; by the which Will we are ſanctified, through the Offering of Jeſus Chriſt, once for all. Every Prieſt ſtandeth miniſtring, and offering the ſame Sacrifices, which can never take away Sins; but this Man, after he offered one Sacrifice for Sins for ever, ſat down at the Right-hand of God; for by one Offering he hath perfected, for ever, them that are ſanctified*; that is, thoſe who obey his Commands, *v.* 9, 10, 11, 12, 14. And in *v.* 18. he tells them, *Where Remiſſion of Sins is, there is no more Offering for Sins.*

IN the reſt of the Chapter, the Apoſtle exhorts the *Hebrews*, whom he calls his Brethren, *to have the Boldneſs to enter in with him into the Holieſt, by the Blood of Jeſus; and having a High Prieſt over the Houſe of God, to draw near with a true Heart, in full Aſſurance of having our Hearts ſprinkled from an evil Conſcience, and our Bodies waſhed with pure Water,*

and to hold fast the Profession of our Faith without wavering; and to consider one another to provoke unto Love, and to good Works; not forsaking the assembling ourselves together, as the Manner of some is; but exhorting one another, and so much the more, as ye see the Day approaching. And he enforces his Argument by telling them, that *if we sin wilfully after the Knowledge of the Truth, there remaineth no more Sacrifice for Sins.*

NOW, in all this Epistle, where this Matter is so fully and at large explained, (as well as in many other Parts of Scripture, where the *Jewish* Priesthood, Rites and Ceremonies are plainly abolished) there is not one Word or Hint given of any other to be established upon the Ruins of it. In all the Chapters which I have quoted, no Priest, Sacrificer, Prophet, Mediator, Intercessor, Reconciler, Benedictor, Embassador, or Spiritual Prince, is once mentioned, but Jesus Christ alone; though one might have expected to have met with him, or to have heard of him here, if there was to have been any such Person in Nature. On the contrary, the Apostle himself addresses to the *Hebrews* as his Equals, and claims no Right, Privilege, or Superiority over them; talks to them always in the Plural Number; nor does he, in the

the modern Phraſe, ſay, *Pray ye*, &c. but joins himſelf with them in every Act of Love and Duty.

IF this was the Caſe of the *Hebrews*, who were Parties to the *Horeb* Contract, by which God became their temporal King, and conſequently, they became bound, and Subjects to all the Laws of *Moſes*; the Argument is much ſtronger in behalf of the *Gentiles*, who were never any way concerned in the *Jewiſh* Prieſthood, Rites and Ceremonies; and there muſt be therefore a very plain and poſitive Inſtitution and Eſtabliſhment found out in Scripture, before they can be ſubjected to it.

NUMBER XLVIII.

Wedneſday, December 14. 1720.

All Prieſtly Power *inconſiſtent with the* Goſpel, *and renounced by it.*

I HAVE fully ſhewn, in my laſt Paper, that as there is but one Sacrifice in the Chriſtian Religion, ſo there is but one Sacrificer or Prieſt, who, as our Church declares in the *Communion Service*, made one Oblation of himſelf, and once offered up a full, perfect, ſufficient Sacrifice, Oblation, and Satisfaction, for the Sins of the whole World; and agreeably to this Declaration, in the 13th Article, ſhe calls the Sacrifices of the Popiſh Prieſts *dangerous Deceits*, and *blaſphemous Fables*.

I CANNOT with my beſt Inquiry find out, that in the whole Chriſtian Religion, there are any new

new Rites and Ceremonies appointed, or any Offices erected; nor in the *Goſpels*, *Acts*, or *Epiſtles*, does any thing like an Inſtitution occur, except that of *Deacons*; which Office is now quite laid aſide, unleſs it may be ſaid to be revived by virtue of the Act of Queen *Elizabeth*, which appoints Overſeers of the Poor: for as to the modern Eccleſiaſtical Deacon, he has no Reſemblance to the Scripture-Officer, *who was appointed to ſerve Tables, upon Complaint of the* Grecian Widows, *who were neglected in the daily Miniſtration*, which the Apoſtles were not at leiſure to attend, becauſe *of the preaching of the Word*, and therefore directed the Congregation to chuſe others, whoſe Buſineſs it ſhould be. *Acts*, chap. vi.

I SHALL therefore inquire how the Popiſh World came to be bleſſed with ſuch a long Train of ſpiritual Equipage; and ſee what can be found in the Scriptures, to warrant or countenance their preſent Pretenſions. In order to it, I ſhall obſerve, that Promulgation is of the Eſſence of a Law, which cannot be without Plainneſs and Perſpicuity: It muſt not be expreſſed in doubtful and equivocal Terms: It muſt not depend upon critical Learning, or different Readings; nor receive its Explanation from the myſterious Gibberiſh, and unin-

telligible Jargon of the Schools; but ought to be ſuch, as a plain, open, ſimple-hearted, ſincere Man may eaſily diſcover, amidſt the numerous and contradictory Schemes of the Eccleſiaſtics.

WEAK and corrupt Men may, through Ignorance or Deſign, frame and enact Laws obſcure and unintelligible; but the Almighty cannot intend to miſlead his Creatures, or want proper Words to expreſs his Meaning: Even ſuch human Laws as enact Penalties, or reſtrain the natural Liberty of Mankind, are always conſtrued ſtrictly, and extended no farther than the Letter expreſly warrants; and it is much more reaſonable, that it ſhould be ſo underſtood in divine Laws, upon which the temporal and eternal Happineſs of all the World depends; not only becauſe of the Importance of the Subject, but as there can be no unwary Omiſſion, or Defect, in Words choſen by the Holy Ghoſt. We may therefore be very ſure, that whatever is not expreſſed in Scripture, plain and clear to common Underſtandings, was not intended for our Inſtruction, or can become a Duty.

WITH our Eyes thus cleared up, we will view thoſe Texts and Parts of holy Writ, brought together to ſupport this unwieldy Fabric. And here, for ſome time, I muſt beg Leave of my Reader,

Reader, to ſtand amazed, and be at a Loſs, which moſt to admire, the Stupidity and Acquieſcence of the Popiſh and popiſhly-affected Laity, or the daring Inſolence and Impiety of their Eccleſiaſtics, that without Reaſon, or the Appearance of Reaſon, without Scripture, or the Colour of Scripture, but directly in Defiance of them both, they could be able to form ſo complete an Empire over the Bodies and Minds of the greateſt Part of *Chriſtendom*; rob them of their Goods and Poſſeſſions, and make them Inſtruments of their own Ruin, hug their Chains, and mortally hate, murder, or ruin every one who would ſet them free.

BUT before I enter upon a particular Diſquiſition of the Texts produced, I would firſt inquire what Benefit can accrue to Chriſtianity by ſuch Powers in the Chriſtian Clergy. A *Roman* Judge is honourably mentioned by *Cicero*, for always asking *Cui bono* (for what End or Advantage) an alledged Action was done; by which he could make ſome Judgment whether it was done or not, and who did it. The ſame is a reaſonable Proceeding in this Caſe; for though it be no Objection to the Truth of what God has ſaid, that it is not agreeable to the Sentiments of weak Men; yet whilſt it remains a Queſtion, whether God ſaid it or not,

there

there cannot be a ſtronger way of arguing uſed, than to ſhew, that it is unworthy of the Divine Wiſdom and Goodneſs, who can ſay nothing which is trifling and impertinent, or make any Ordinances uſeleſs or miſchievous to his Creatures.

NOTHING can come from God, but what is god-like; and therefore when any Number of Men, combining together, dare tell me any thing in his Name, of no Uſe to Religion or Virtue, and yet of apparent Advantage to themſelves, or their Order, I ſhall always believe it to be an Invention of their own, forged to gratify their Ambition and Avarice, and ſhall ever vindicate the Almighty from the imputed Calumny.

NOW of what Uſe is it to Religion and Virtue, that the Clergy ſhould always make one another? Whether the Impoſition of Hands be eſteemed barely a Ceremony, to denote a Perſon appointed to an Office, or be the Appointment itſelf? Or whether he be choſen by laying on of Hands, or by any other Ceremony? Will the ſame Perſon, with the ſame Qualifications, be a better Man, better Chriſtian, or abler Divine, if he receive his Orders in a direct Line from the Apoſtles, through the Canal of a Popiſh, High-Church, or Presbyterian Prieſt-

Prieſthood, or if only from the Civil Magiſtrate, or voluntary Societies? Or is it poſſible to believe, that whilſt he is adminiſtring the Offices of Religion, and doing the Duties of the Goſpel, the devout Chriſtian People ſhall loſe the Effects of their Piety, and the Benefit of Chriſt's Promiſes, for the Defect of any Circumſtance, or any Omiſſion or Superfluity in his Adoption; Things which they could neither prevent nor know? Sure we have not ſo learned Chriſt!

CAN we ſuppoſe, that Almighty God ſhould make ſuch an Eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity, as muſt deſtroy Chriſtianity itſelf; and put it under the ſole Guidance and Direction of a Society of Men, who will have a perpetual Intereſt to overturn or pervert it, and ever did ſo, when they had Power?

WHAT can be ſuggeſted more abſurd, than that the good God ſhould ſend his Son from Heaven, to teach Virtue and Goodneſs to Men, to manumit and ſet them free from the Superſtitions of the *Jews*, and the Idolatries of the *Gentiles*; who, whilſt upon Earth, ſhould not only diſclaim all Power and Dominion himſelf, but ſuffer an ignominious Death, to make Mankind happy; and yet ſubject them to a Yoke, the moſt arbitrary and tyrannical in the World, without

without Redreſs, without Remedy; where the Governors have conſtant Temptations and Motives to oppreſs, and the Governed no Means to reſiſt or oppoſe? For no leſs than this are the Popiſh and High-Church Demands upon us, and the inevitable Conſequences of their wild and wicked Hypotheſis.

IF they are an Order of Men appointed directly by God, and have the Government of the Church by Divine Right, in all Things which relate to Spirituals (that is, in all Things wherein their own Intereſt is concerned); if they are to be the ſole Judges of their own Powers, and what Doctrines they are to teach; if the People are to receive them implicitly, and to ſubmit to, and be concluded by, their Determinations; and if no human Authority muſt controul them; which, I think, thoſe whom I write againſt, all claim (though ſcarce two of them agree in whoſe Hands, or in what Part of the Clergy, theſe Powers are veſted); then it is plain, that they are poſſeſſed of the moſt deſpotic, unlimited, and uncontroulable Sovereignty in the Univerſe, and which of Neceſſity muſt prove, and actually ever has proved, the moſt cruel and tyrannical in the Exerciſe.

BUT if they have not this Power, they can have none at all, but what the Civil Magiſtrate, or voluntary Societies, truſt them with; for, what is the Name of a Power, which every Man is a Judge whether he will ſubmit to or not? Or how can that be ſaid to be Divine, which the Civil Magiſtrate can controul at his Pleaſure? There can be no Medium in Nature betwixt another's judging for me, and my judging for myſelf: If another be to judge for me, I muſt ſubmit to his Determinations, let them be ever ſo abſurd, monſtrous or wicked; but if I have a Right to re-examine them, they can amount to no more than Advice, and my own Judgment alone muſt determine me.

As I think I have amply proved, that it is inconſiſtent with the Goodneſs of God to truſt the Powers ſo claimed with the Popiſh Clergy; ſo in my two next Papers I will as fully prove, that, in Fact, he has given them no Authority at all.

INDEED, to do them Right, the Popiſh Prieſts do not pretend to offer any direct Texts to their Purpoſe, expreſſing particularly the Powers given them, and the Perſons in whom they are to be veſted; as might be reaſonably expected in a Caſe ſo nearly affecting the Liberties

berties of all Mankind; and as was actually done in the *Jewiſh* Diſpenſation, where every Circumſtance relating to their Worſhip, and the Prieſt's Office, was minutely deſcribed; but inſtead thereof, they pick up ſcattered and diſjointed Sentences, and ſet them together by the Ears, to try what they can get by the Scuffle: They argue from Types, Antitypes, Parables, Metaphors, Allegories, Alluſions, Inferences, Patterns, Reſemblances, Figures and Shadows; and by ſuch means can fetch every thing out of every thing.

THE Bible is a miſcellaneous Book, from whence crazed or deſigning Men, by joining or disjoining; by various Readings, corrupt or ignorant Tranſlations; by far-fetched Interpretations, and putting different Meanings upon Words in Scripture from what they ſignify in any other Parts of Language; by trifling and knaviſh Diſtinctions, metaphyſical Subtilties, no Definitions, but ſhifting the Significations of Words as they have Occaſion; by References to antient Cuſtoms, and Twenty other Theological Syſtems of Reaſoning, may always fetch Materials to ſerve their looſe or wicked Purpoſes; as we actually find an Hundred different, and many of them almoſt contradictory, Religions are pretended to be deduced from that Book;

Book; and if the Prieſts were let alone, they would find a Thouſand more, and burn for them all (I mean, other People). But if Men would be contented to judge of the Goſpel Style, by the ſame Rule as they do of other Writings; if they could be perſuaded, that God Almighty, when he condeſcends to make uſe of human Language, intends to be underſtood, and conſequently uſes Words in their common Acceptation; that when he deſigned to reveal his Will to Babes and Sucklings, (that is, to the Ignorant and Unlearned) he did not chuſe to do it in Riddles, to make way for Interpreters, and that the Popiſh Clergy might have a Pretence for picking the Laity's Pockets; then I affirm, that the Bible is the plaineſt, openeſt, moſt moral, ſignificant, and intelligible Book in the World, in all Things which can be the Duty of a Man to know; and in no Part of it more ſo, than in the preſent Diſpute, which has been rendered ſo perplexed and intricate by Craft and Artifice: And I undertake in my two next Papers to make this out.

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NUMBER XLIX.

Wedneſday, December 21. 1720.

The ſame Subject continued.

THERE is nothing in the Four Goſpels to authorize or countenance the Diſtinction of Eccleſiaſtical and Civil; for as our Saviour renounced all worldly Power himſelf, ſo he gave none. He neither uſed nor allowed the Uſe of Force and Violence, to coerce and conquer Subjects to his Kingdom, which he declared was not of this World. As the Religion, which he taught, was not to conſiſt of outward Actions and Ceremonies, like the Worſhip of the *Gentiles*, but was to reſide in the Mind; ſo he choſe proper Means to attain his End: He knew that the Sword might make Hypocrites and Slaves, but never Converts; he therefore inſtructed his Apoſtles

Apoſtles to win Mens Affection by Love and Gentleneſs, to allure them by Example, and convince them by the Reaſonableneſs of his Precepts; and he enabled them to prove their Miſſion by Wonders and Miracles; all which are directly contrary to the Proceedings of *Mahomet*, whoſe Aim was temporal Dominion, and his Religion Impoſture; and conſequently Violence was neceſſary to propagate both: For Abſurdity can no way be ſupported but by Tyranny; but Truth can ever defend itſelf, and deſires nothing but a fair Examination, a free Hearing, and equal Favour.

HE takes every Occaſion to caution his Apoſtles againſt ſpiritual Pride, and claiming Superiority over others, or one another: The Powers which he gave them were of another Kind, ſuch as were proper to overcome the Prejudices of the innocent and well-meaning, though miſled People; and to confound the Malice and Subtilty of the governing Prieſthood; namely, *A Power againſt unclean Spirits, and to caſt them out; to heal all manner of Sickneſs, and all manner of Diſeaſes; and to raiſe the Dead.* Sure no Clergyman pretends to theſe Powers!

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HE bids them provide *neither Silver, nor Gold, nor Braſs, in their Pockets; nor Scrip for their Journey; neither two Coats, nor Shoes, nor Staves:* Much leſs, Coaches. I preſume that no Clergyman deſires theſe Powers.

HE orders them, *when they come into any Houſe, to ſalute it; and if they do not receive them, and hear their Words, to depart from that Houſe, and ſhake off the Duſt of their Feet.* The Popiſh Clergy are for ſetting Fire to ſuch an Houſe, (as they did lately to ſeveral) and for burning and damning every one within it.

THE Apoſtles Commiſſion was to *preach Chriſt to all Nations*, in *Matthew*; and in *Mark, to go into all the World, and to preach him to every Creature.* The Popiſh Prieſt ſtays at home, and preaches himſelf only, to his own Pariſh, for Money.

THOSE who *believed in the Apoſtles, and were baptized, had the Power of caſting out Devils in Chriſt's Name, and ſpeaking with new Tongues: They could take up Serpents; no deadly thing they drank could hurt them; they laid Hands upon the Sick, and they recovered.* Thoſe who believe in the Popiſh Prieſt, are the beſt Friends that the Devil has; and inſtead of caſting him out, for the moſt part, bring

bring him in: They can ſpeak Senſe with no Tongue; nor dare venture on any Poiſon, but what proceeds from Gluttony and Drunkenneſs, with which they give their Votaries Diſeaſes, inſtead of recovering them.

THE Apoſtles were *to be Witneſſes of all which they had heard or ſeen ſaid or done by our Saviour*; and who elſe could be ſo? But the Popiſh Prieſt has no other Means of knowing Chriſt, than any Layman of equal Abilities, and equal Application; nor can have any greater Motive or Inducement to preach him, except his Hire; which, as it firſt ſuborned his Predeceſſors to betray his Perſon, and take away his Life, ſo it has ever ſince been the Occaſion of crucifying him anew, by miſrepreſenting his Doctrines, and making them ſubſervient to worldly Ambition and Intereſt; a Practice ſo univerſal, that no *Engliſhman* can ſet his Foot out of his own Country, but he ſees the Clergy perverting the Scripture, and abuſing the People.

OUR Saviour himſelf appointed the Seventy Diſciples, whom *he ſent before him two by two, in every Place where he intended himſelf to go*; and gave them Powers almoſt equal to the Powers of the Apoſtles, *even to heal the Sick, to tread on Serpents and Scorpions, and over all the*

the Power of the Enemy, and that nothing ſhould hurt them; but he was ſo far from giving any worldly Authority, that he tells them, *he ſends them forth as Lambs amongſt Wolves*; *that they ſhould carry nothing with them*; *but whatſoever Houſe they came into, they ſhould ſay, Peace to that Houſe, and ſhould eat and drink ſuch things as the People gave them*; *and whatever City they came into, they ſhould eat ſuch things as were ſet before them, for the Labourer is worthy of his Hire* (here it ſeems the People were to judge what Wages and Hire they deſerve); *and if any Perſons refuſed to receive them, they were to go into the Streets, and ſhake off the Duſt of their Feet at them*; which was all the Excommunication that they were directed to uſe, and was nothing elſe but to leave them in their Sins, and preach to them no longer.

WHATEVER is meant by the figurative and abſtruſe Texts of binding and looſing, remitting and retaining Sins, is evidently confined to thoſe whom it is ſpoken to, and ſeems to have relation to the other World alone.

NOW I would be glad to know, By what Rules of Conſtruction can the Powers, now claimed by any Set of Clergy in the World, be brought from theſe Texts, or in what Senſe can any Clergyman be ſaid to be a Succeſſor of the Apoſtles,

Apoſtles, more than every Layman of equal Qualifications.

IF our Saviour had intended to have conveyed down any Powers to any Man, or Set of Men whatſoever, it is impoſſible to believe but he would have expreſſed himſelf in the fulleſt and moſt ſignificant Words; and left no Doubt behind him, what thoſe Powers were, and to whom they belonged. No Statute enacted amongſt weak Mortals is penned ſo looſely: What Lawyer in *Weſtminſter-Hall* could have found out ſovereign Power in the Precept, *Feed my Sheep*? Or in our Saviour's Promiſe to aſſiſt the Apoſtles, and perhaps all Chriſtians in general, in theſe Words, *I will be with you to the End of the World*?

THE Prieſts of *Delphos*, uttering, for the moſt part, their Oracles in ſorry and balderdaſh Poetry, gave Riſe to a waggiſh Jeſt amongſt the Antients, That *Homer* could write better Verſes than *Apollo*, who inſpired him. But ſure no one among Chriſtians will be ſo profane, as to give Occaſion to the Suggeſtion, that the Attorney General can draw up a clearer and more intelligible Commiſſion than the Apoſtles.

BUT though there be nothing in the Goſpels to juſtify or excuſe the prieſtly Demands

upon the Laity, yet there are many Texts e
preſly againſt them, in which our Saviour d
claims all Authority over Men, and forbids h
Diſciples and Followers aſſuming Superio
over their Brethren, or cenſuring, judging,
uſing any one ill, for not receiving, or for o
poſing them.

IN *Luke* the xiith. *v.* 13. A Man deſires
our Saviour to ſpeak to his Brother to divi
his Inheritance with him; and his Anſwer
Who made me a Judge, or a Divider, r
you?

IN *John*, chap. xii. *v.* 47, 48. our Savi
declares, *If any Man hears his Words, and b
lieves not*, that *he will not judge him; for
came not to judge the World, but to ſave
World.* And in the next Verſe leaves him
the Judgment of the Father, and tells h
what will be his Doom.

IN *John*, chap. xviii. *v.* 36. he was brou
before *Pilate* for ſpeaking Treaſon againſt
ſar, and claiming the Temporal Kingdom
Judea; and he took that Occaſion to renou
all earthly Sovereignty, by declaring, *his K
dom was not of this World*, and gave his Re
for it; which ſo ſatisfied the *Roman* Gover
ever jealous of his Maſter's Authority, that
pronounced him innocent, and would g
h

e releaſed him, if the *Jewiſh* Prieſts would e ſuffered it.

N *Matthew*, Chap. vii. *v.* 1, 2, 3. he ſays his Diſciples, *Judge not, leſt ye be judged; with what Judgment ye judge ye ſhall be ged, and what Meaſure ye mete ſhall be mea- ſured to you again*, &c.

N *Luke*, Chap. ix. *v.* 54. *James* and *John* ed of him, that they might command Fire Heaven to puniſh the *Samaritans* for not iving him; which he was ſo far from con- ing to, that *he reproves them for it*; and them, *Ye know not what Spirit ye are of; the Son of Man is not come to deſtroy the ld, but to ſave the World.*

N the ſame Chapter, *John* ſaid to him, *er, we ſaw one caſting out Devils in thy e, and we forbad him, becauſe he followeth with us. And Jeſus ſaid, Forbid him not; he that is not againſt us, is for us.* A plain ept for Chriſtians to tolerate one another.

HROUGH the whole xviiith Chapter of hew, our Saviour exhorts his Diſciples to umble, and to forgive Offences. And in , 16, 17. tells them, *If thy Brother treſ- againſt thee, go and tell him his Fault be- thee and him alone. But if he will not thee, take one or two more with thee*, &c.

and if he ſhall neglect to hear them, tell it t
the Church, or Congregation: *And if he n*
glect to hear the Church, let him be to thee l
a Heathen or Publican; that is, have no mo
to do with him. And in the two Verſes afte
he tells them what a Church is, namely, *Wh*
two or three are gathered together in my Nam
I will be in the midſt of them; and his Preſenc
methinks, ſhould be effectual to conſtitute
complete Church, though a Parſon is not o
of the Company.

INDEED the whole New Teſtament i
Leſſon of Humility, Humanity, and Moral
the Sermon upon the Mount is nothing el
and we every-where find conſtant Precepts a
Cautions againſt Pride and Domination.

IN the xxiiid of *Matthew*, our Saviour ſp
to the Multitude, and to his Diſciples, bidd
them *not to be called Maſter*; *for one is y*
Maſter, even Chriſt, all ye are Brethren; *
he that is greateſt amongſt you, ſhall be y
Servant; *and whoever does exalt himſelf, ſh*
be abaſed; *and he that ſhall humble himſelf, ſh*
be exalted.

IN *Luke*, chap. xx. *v.* 46. he warns his D
ciples to *beware of the* Scribes, *who deſir*
walk in long Robes, and love Greetings in
Markets, and the higheſt Seats in the Sy

gogues, and the chief Places at Feaſts, (hear, O ye Popiſh Biſhops, Prieſts, and Deacons!) who devour Widows Houſes, *and for a Shew make long Prayers.*

IN *Luke* xxii. *v.* 24, 25, 26. *There was a ſtrife amongſt the Apoſtles which ſhould be the greateſt. And Jeſus ſaid unto them, The Kings of the* Gentiles *exerciſe Authority over them, and they that exerciſe Authority upon them, are called Benefactors. But ye ſhall not be ſo; but he that is greateſt amongſt you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth ſerve.* The ſame in *Matthew*, chap. xx. v. 25, 26, 27. And he enforces this Precept in Verſe 28. from his own Conduct, *even as the Son of Man came not to be miniſtred unto, but to miniſter.*

OUR Saviour did not, like others, preach Doctrines to his Diſciples which he refuſed to practiſe; but teaches them Modeſty and Humility by his own Example: For, in the xiiith of *John*, he *waſhes their Feet himſelf, and bids them waſh one another's.* How different is this from the proud Spirit of his pretended Succeſſors, who take Place of the Nobility and Gentry, and make the great Men of the Earth kiſs their Slippers; ſalute them upon the Knee, as if they were Gods below, or ſovereign Princes;

nay more, ſet themſelves above the Crown it-
ſelf; for what is it elſe they mean, after ſaying
Grace, and in their Cups, by putting the Church
(by which they mean themſelves) before the
King and Royal Family? We all know no
well their Kindneſs for the People, (who are the
Scriptural and Legal Church) to ſuſpect that
they mean them.

NOT many Years ſince, the conſtant Health
among them was, *King*, *Queen*, and *Church*;
but now all the High Clergy are guilty of the
ſame Crime for which Cardinal *Wolſey* ought
to have loſt, and in all Likelihood would have
loſt his Head, if he had not prevented it, as it
is ſaid, by Self-murder, even the Crime of ſet-
ting themſelves above the Crown, and *viva voce*
crying out, *Ego & Rex meus*, when they are in
the Humour of owning him as ſuch.

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NUMBER L.

Wedneſday, December 28. 1720.

An Inquiry *into* Religious Eſtabliſhments, *with a further Confutation of the impious and abſurd Claims of* High Prieſts.

SO various and contradictory are the Opinions and Reaſonings of Men, that no voluntary Society or Aſſembly can act, or long hold together, without eſtabliſhing certain Rules and Orders, amongſt themſelves, regarding the common Intereſt and Conduct of the Society, and appointing Perſons whoſe Duty it ſhall be, to ſee thoſe Orders put in Execution; and if any Member does not think it lawful or expedient to ſubmit to the public Regulations, they muſt have a Right to exclude him, or in other Words, to excommunicate him from their Body, if he do not chuſe to ſeparate himſelf.

IF the Deſign of the Meeting be to wor-ſhip God, to join in the ſame Prayers, and for Exhortation and Edification, (which Aſſembly is called a Church) there muſt be Time and Place appointed when and where they are to meet, and Perſons to prepare and keep in Or-der all Things neceſſary for their Meeting. There muſt be one, or more, appointed to read thoſe Prayers to the Congregation; in which they are to join, and to do all thoſe Offices, which can be performed only by ſingle Perſons; and if the Society would avoid the Loquacity and Interruption of ignorant and conceited Members, they muſt confine Exhor-ation to one, or to a few Perſons of approved Gravity and Wiſdom. There muſt be alſo ſome Means of conferring and agreeing toge-ther, to ſupport the common Expences of Build-ings, Repairs, Utenſils, *&c.* and conſequently there muſt be Debates, which cannot well be carried on without a Preſident, Chairman, or Prolocutor, to regulate them, collect their Voices, and pronounce their Reſolutions; without which Precautions, they will be more likely to fight than pray.

IF ſeveral of theſe Churches, reſiding at too great a Diſtance from one another to meet together, ſhould eſteem it their Duty or Ad-

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vantage to join in the ſame Form of Worſhip, and unite in a common Intereſt to ſupport it, they muſt find out ſome Means of Communication, and contrive ſome Cement of their Union, otherwiſe they would ſoon ſeparate again: This may be done by chuſing Deputies to repreſent them, and to concert common Meaſures, or by ſubmitting themſelves to the Conduct and Determinations of one or more Perſons, choſen by common Conſent, in all ſuch Matters as do not interfere with their Duty to God; and the Perſons ſo choſen can have no more Power, nor of longer Duration, than their Principals think fit to give them.

IF theſe Churches think it their Duty or Intereſt to inlarge their Bottom, and make Converts, they cannot take a more effectual Method to do it, than to chooſe, appoint, or ordain, diſcreet and honeſt Men, who are acquainted with their Way of Worſhip, their Ordinances, and the Reaſons of them, and ſend them forth to teach, perſuade, and convince others; to exhort them with Meekneſs and Love, (the likelieſt Way to gain them) and afterwards to preſide and watch over them, and thereby prevent their Straying and Apoſtatizing.

THIS was the Caſe in the Beginnings of Chriſtianity, before National Churches were eſtabliſhed, as well as the preſent Caſe of independent, voluntary Societies. The Apoſtles Commiſſion was, *to go into all the World, and preach Chriſt to every Creature.* This was impoſſible for them to do in their own Perſons; and therefore as they made Converts, they exhorted them to convert others, as *Acts* viii. *v.* 1, 4. When the Apoſtles were left at *Jeruſalem, the Church was ſcattered abroad through all* Judea *and* Samaria, *and thoſe who were ſcattered abroad preached the World.* Acts xi. *v.* 19, 20. *They that were ſcattered abroad upon the Perſecution that aroſe about* Stephen, *travelled as far as* Phœnice *and* Cyprus, *and preached the Word to none but the* Jews *only; and ſome of them, when they were come to* Antioch, *ſpake unto the* Grecians, *preaching the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* Chap. iv. *v.* 4. Peter *and* John *converted Five thouſand.* And *v.* 31. *They were all filled with the Holy Ghoſt, and they ſpake the Word of God with Boldneſs.*

AND they were all enabled to prove their Miſſion, by having the Power of working Miracles; for *Mark* xvi. *v.* 17, 18. theſe Signs were to follow thoſe who believed in Chriſt's Name: *They could caſt out Devils, they*

could

and ſpeak with new Tongues; they could take up Serpents; no deadly thing could hurt them; they could lay their Hands on the Sick, and recover them. John, Chap. xiv. *v.* 12. our Saviour ſays to his Diſciples, *Whoever believeth in me, the Works that I do ſhall he do, and greater than theſe ſhall he do:* Which Gifts would have been unneceſſary, if they had been to have made no Uſe of them; and by virtue of theſe general Powers given to all Chriſtians, *Philip* and *Stephen*, who were choſen by the Congregation to the menial Office of ſerving Tables, preached, baptized, and did many Wonders and Miracles, *Acts*, Chap. vi. *v.* 8. Chap. viii. *v.* 7.

BUT beſides the common Right which every Man had to preach Chriſt, and propagate his Kingdom, the Apoſtle prevailed with particular Perſons to undertake it, and make it their Buſineſs, who were to aſſiſt and overſee the Brethren, as a Shepherd does his Sheep: Having the Gift of diſcerning Spirits, they knew who were fitteſt for the Employment, and who would engage in it without any ſiniſter Views; but it is plain, they gave no Gifts or Advantages to them above other Chriſtians. They could not give the Holy Ghoſt; which Power was confined to the Apoſtles alone, and as far

as appears, was beſtowed without Diſtinction upon all who believed, and were baptized.

THE Power of ſpeaking with Tongues, as is aboveſaid, was given to all Believers; which appears to be in Scripture one conſtant and inſeparable Mark of having received the Holy Ghoſt.

IN *Acts* the iid. *v.* 4. *The Holy Ghoſt fell on the Apoſtles, and they ſpake with Tongues.* In *Acts* x. *v.* 44, 45. *While* Peter *ſpoke, the Holy Ghoſt fell on all who heard the Word, and the* Jews *were aſtoniſhed when they heard the* Gentiles *ſpeak with Tongues.* Chap. xix. *v.* 6. Paul *lays his Hands on certain Diſciples, and the Holy Ghoſt came on them, and they ſpake with Tongues, and propheſied.* Acts the xi*th. v.* 15, 16, 17. *Peter,* juſtifying himſelf to the *Jews,* for preaching to the *Gentiles,* ſays, *And as I began to ſpeak, the Holy Ghoſt fell on them as on us at the Beginning. Then remembered I the Word of the Lord, how that he ſaid,* John *indeed baptized with Water, but ye ſhall be baptized with the Holy Ghoſt: Foraſmuch therefore as God gave them* (namely thoſe who believed) *the like Gift as he did to us, who believed in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, what was I, that I ſhould withſtand God?* So that here, from the Mouth of *Peter* himſelf we have it, that

that the *Gentiles* who believed, had the ſame Gift as the *Apoſtles*. *Chap.* viii. *v.* 14, 17. *When the Apoſtles at* Jeruſalem *had heard, that the* Samaritans *had received the Word, they ſent to them* Peter *and* John, *who laid Hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghoſt*, which they had not received before, though they were baptized by *Philip*. In *chap.* ii. *v.* 38. *Peter* ſays to them of *Iſrael, Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the Name of Jeſus Chriſt, for the Remiſſion of Sins, and ye ſhall receive the Holy Ghoſt*; and *v.* 41. *They gladly received the Word, and the ſame Day were added to them about Three thouſand Souls*, who muſt have all conſequently received the Holy Ghoſt. Chap. xv. *v.* 8, 9. *Paul*, ſpeaking of the *Gentiles*, ſays, *God, which knoweth the Hearts, bare them Witneſs, giving them the Holy Ghoſt, even as he did unto us, and put no Difference between them and us, purifying their Hearts by Faith.*

THEREFORE it appears plain to me, that all who believed, eſpecially by the Apoſtles Miniſtration, received the Holy Ghoſt, and could do Miracles; and conſequently, the Perſons aforeſaid, by whatever Names they are called, were not deſigned to be an Order of Men diſtinct from other Chriſtians, with differ-

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ent Powers and Privileges. They undertook a Burden, not a Command. They were better and poorer than other People, not their Lords and Maſters; nor is there a Word in Scripture, whereby we can gueſs, that they were intended to be Succeſſors to the Apoſtles; much leſs that the Succeſſorſhip was to continue to the End of the World; and it is evident in Fact, that there were no ſuch appointed, becauſe the Power of giving the Holy Ghoſt, and, in Conſequence, of doing Miracles, ſoon ceaſed in the Church.

WITH this View let us now examine the *Acts* and *Epiſtles*, and ſee what there is which contradicts it.

ACTS xiv. *v.* 23. Paul *and* Barnabas *ordained Elders in every City*; and *chap.* xx. *v.* 17. Paul *calls the Elders of the Church of* Epheſus *together*; and *v.* 28. tells them their Duty. *Take heed therefore unto yourſelves, and to all the Flock, over the which the Holy Ghoſt hath made you Overſeers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchaſed with his own Blood.* Here luckily the Word *Epiſcopos* is tranſlated *Overſeer*, and not *Biſhop*, becauſe it is explained in the Text to import no more, than *to feed the Church of God*, that is, to aſſiſt them, to preach to them, to exhort them, to adviſe

advise them, and to give them good Examples; but all this implies no Jurisdiction, nor had the Apostles any to give.

1 THESSALONIANS, chap. v. *v.* 12. *And we beseech you, Brethren, to know them which labour amongst you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you.* Here *Paul*, with all Humility, intreats the *Thessalonians*, that they will know, that is, take Notice of, and hearken to, those who labour for their sakes, who watch over them, and admonish them to mend their Lives.

EPHESIANS, chap. iv. *v.* 7, 11. *Unto every one is given Grace, according to the Measure of the Gift of Christ; and he gave some Apostles; and some Prophets; and some Evangelists; and some Pastors and Teachers*; and in the next Verse tells for what, namely, *for the perfecting the Saints*, (that is, all the Faithful) *for the Work of the Ministry, and for the edifying the Body of Christ.*

ROMANS, chap. x. *v.* 14, 15. *How then shall they call upon him, in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a Preacher? And how shall they preach, unless they be sent?* This relates plainly to the teaching of the Apostles, who were sent

to

to preach the Goſpel to the unconverted World, that otherwiſe could have known nothing of it; and poſſibly, in a larger Senſe, may be extended to all Chriſtians, who had the Power as well as the Means to preach it, and conſequently might be ſaid to be ſent to do it: But I ſhould be glad to know, by what Skill in Chymiſtry it has been diſcovered, or how it came to be gueſſed, that the Clergy of the many Nations in *Europe*, as by Law ſeverally eſtabliſhed, were the Perſons meant; or if only one Sort of them, which that is; when 'tis plain, that they have no other Means of knowing Chriſt than the Laity have, and for the moſt part can tell them no more than they knew before.

HEBREWS, chap. xiii. *v.* 7. *Remember them which have the Rule over you, who have ſpoken unto you the Word of God, whoſe Faith follow, conſidering the End of their Converſation:* And *v.* 17. *Obey*, by others tranſlated, *Be perſuaded by, them that have the Rule over you, and ſubmit yourſelves; for they watch for your Souls, as thoſe who muſt give Account.* Here, it ſeems, the Editors of our *Engliſh* Bible do not think fit to ſtand to their Tranſlations; for in the Margin, againſt the Words *Rule over you*, in both Verſes they have inſerted the Word *Guides*, which

which does not give us altogether ſo frightful an Image.

THE Word tranſlated *obey* in the laſt Verſe, is explained by the Word *remember* in the firſt; and the Reaſon given in the one is, *becauſe you are to conſider the End of their Converſation*; and in the other is, becauſe *they watch for your Souls*; ſo that the *Hebrews* were exhorted *to remember*, hearken to, *or be perſuaded by their Guides, who had ſpoken to them the Word of God, which was the End of their Converſation, and who watched for their Souls:* And, I think, all good Chriſtians ought to do ſo ſtill, when they know where to find them, and the Clergy have agreed amongſt themſelves who they are.

AT the latter End of the Second Epiſtle to *Timothy*, in our Edition of the Bible, he is ſaid to be *the firſt Biſhop of* Epheſus, by which we are to underſtand, if we pleaſe, that he was in Poſſeſſion of the Authority and Dignity of a modern Prelate; but the Text ſays no ſuch Matter: Indeed *Paul's* firſt Epiſtle, chap. i. *v.* 11. ſays, that *the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt was committed to his Truſt*, that is, he was intruſted to preach it. And, *v.* 18. he *commits the ſame Charge to* Timothy: But in chap. iv. *v.* 12, 13. he tells him what he is to do; he is *to be an Example to the Believers in Word, in*

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Converſation, in Charity, in Faith, in Purity, and, till he comes himſelf, he is to give Attendance to Reading, to Exhortation, to Doctrine; and the reſt of the Epiſtle is ſpent in telling him what Doctrine he is to preach.

IN his 2*d* Epiſtle, *Paul* ſays unto him, *And the Things thou haſt heard from me amongſt many Witneſſes, the ſame commit thou to faithful Men, who ſhall be able to teach others alſo*; which he expreſſes ſummarily before, in theſe Words, *Lay Hands ſuddenly on no Man*; a Ceremony always uſed amongſt the *Jews*, to denote a Perſon appointed for any Purpoſe, as well as on many other Occaſions; ſo that *Paul* himſelf knew, by Inſpiration, who was fit for his Charge, and *Timothy* was to make good Inquiry after *faithful* Men: But there is no Power here given *but to preach the Goſpel, and to employ others to do it*; which I have ſhewn every one was at Liberty to do, though all had not an equal Call, or were equally qualified for it; and therefore it was certainly good Advice to endeavour to find out ſuch as were, and prevail upon them to undertake it.

IN the Epiſtle to *Titus*, who, it ſeems, was another Biſhop, he is directed *to ſet in order the things which are wanting*, (the Buſineſs amongſt us of Churchwardens and Veſtry-men) *and*

to

to ordain Elders in every City, as Paul *had appointed him*; which alludes to private Directions before given, and proves nothing, but that *Paul* took the beſt Precautions, and moſt prudent Meaſures, to propagate Chriſtianity, by reducing his Converts in every City, into orderly, though voluntary Societies, by finding out and appointing diſcreet and honeſt Men to aſſiſt and ſuperintend the reſt; and it cannot be doubted but the People, who knew him to be inſpired, would be adviſed by him, accept his Recommendations, and conſequently hearken to, truſt their Affairs, and be directed by the Wiſdom of Perſons ſo powerfully recommended; which Reſpect and Deference has been always paid by every Sect, that ever appeared in the World, to their firſt Founders, and for the moſt part to their After-leaders too.

THESE are all the Texts that I can at preſent remember, which are uſually brought to ſupport the prieſtly Claims, except ſuch as plainly relate to our Saviour himſelf, or his Apoſtles; but if any others occur hereafter, I ſhall take Notice of them in proper Time.

BUT what has all this to do with a formal and ſolemn Inſtitution, and eſtabliſhed Form of Government, a political Oeconomy, or, in Eccle-

Eccleſiaſtical Language and Style, a Spiritual Hierarchy?

WHAT, muſt ſovereign and independent Power (without which, as I have ſhewn in my 48*th* Paper, there can be in this Caſe no Power at all) depend upon figurative Expreſſions, and Alluſions to Seniority of Age, as *Elders*; to mean and low Profeſſions, as *Guides*, *Shepherds*, *Paſtors*, *Teachers*, *Overſeers*, notably tranſlated *Biſhops*? Or upon the critical Knowledge of antient Eaſtern Terms, of doubtful and diſputed Significations, which would put it in the Power of the very few Men ſaid to be skilled in the Oriental Tongues, to ſettle what Eſtabliſhments or Religion they pleaſe?

THE Prophets and Evangeliſts often ſpeak after the Manner of the Eaſtern Nations, which was for the moſt part figurative; where, *for ever*, *to the End of the World*, and ſuch-like Language, was frequently uſed to denote a long Space of Time; and therefore general Expreſſions in Scripture are not always to be taken ſtrictly, as *Covetouſneſs is the Root of* ALL *Evil*: *Swear not* AT ALL: *Children and Servants, obey your Parents and Maſters in* ALL *things*: *Take no Care for the Morrow*: *Take no Thought for your Life, what you ſhall eat, what*

what you ſhall drink, or what you ſhall put on: Whatever you ask of my Father in my Name, he will give it you. Submit yourſelves to one another: Ye younger, be ſubject to the elder; yea, be ſubject to one another. And there were many other things which Jeſus did, the which if they ſhould be written, the whole World could not contain the Books: And more than an Hundred others of the ſame Kind. When ſuch Paſſages occur, we muſt conſtrue them by the Rules of eternal Righteouſneſs, the Reaſon of the Thing, and the general Bent of Scripture; and then we cannot miſtake their Meaning, but in ſuch Caſes as are of no Conſequence, whether we do or not.

BESIDES, almoſt all Words vary their Meaning by Time; and every one, of the leaſt Reading, knows that there is ſcarce a Word in Nature, (except the proper Names of Perſons, Places, and Things) that is anſwered by any other in a different Language, ſo as to comprehend exactly the ſame Number of Ideas; nor is it probable, that any two Perſons of the ſame Nation ever uſed one ſuch Word preciſely to the ſame Purpoſe; but if they were asked to give an adequate Definition of what they meant by it, would differ in ſome Particular: Therefore 'tis abſurd to ſuppoſe, that

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Mens Duty and eternal Salvation ſhould depend upon the nice Signification of ſingle *Hebrew* and *Greek* Words; Languages ſo long ſince out of common Uſe, and dead.

THE Almighty is too merciful to his Creatures to leave them at ſuch Uncertainties, which is in Effect to let them throw Croſs and Pile for their Religion. When he makes an Eſtabliſhment, and gives Laws to Mankind, he always expreſſes himſelf in a manner not to be miſunderſtood; ſo he did in the *Jewiſh* Diſpenſation, where there was no Diſpute about the Meaning of their Law. Though there is nothing in Scripture to countenance theſe Pretenſions, yet the Goſpel almoſt every-where forbids them, as I have partly ſhewn in my laſt Paper, and ſhall unanſwerably make out hereafter, when I ſhall more fully conſider the *Acts* and *Epiſtles*; and then I will ſhew, that the Apoſtles themſelves claimed no Authority over other Chriſtians, or any Power but that of Perſuaſion. I ſhall endeavour to ſhew, what is meant by Baptiſm and the Lord's Supper; and do undertake to prove, that the Clergy have no more Power from Scripture to adminiſter them, than Women and Laymen, and that nothing is meant by Excommunication, but not keeping ill Company. I will ſhew too, that

that the Clergy, in the firſt Ages of Chriſtianity, were always choſen by the People, and lived upon their Alms, and by what Steps of Impiety and Forgery the *Popiſh* Prieſthood came to be Lords of ſo great a Part of the terreſtrial Globe.

T.

NUMBER LI.

Wedneſday, December 31. 1720.

Of the Three High Churches *in* England.

HAVING, in my former Papers, given ſome Account of the Scripture-Church; I ſhall, in this, give an Account of the *Three High Churches in* England, which are very different from it. And, tho' in order to this, I ſhall be obliged to take in a good deal of Matter, and reveal many *High-Church* and *Jacobite Secrets*; yet I hope to give the Public a clear Notion of them in the Compaſs of one Paper. I ſhall, *Firſt*, ſtate what the *true Church of* England is; and then deſcribe the *Three High Churches of* England, ſhewing how they differ from one another, and from the *true Church of* England.

I. FIRST,

FIRST, What the *true Church of* England is. All Churches by Law eſtabliſhed, are Creatures of that State, where they are ſo eſtabliſhed. For whatever is eſtabliſhed, neceſſarily depends on the Legiſlature, which can and does repeal and enact whatever it thinks fit, and always calls its preſent Conſtitution in Religion, *The Church by Law eſtabliſhed.* The Church of *England* therefore by Law eſtabliſhed, is whatever the Legiſlature has enacted; and continues in Force, in relation to Religion, together with whatever is injoined by the Authority of the King, or is determined by the proper Judicatories, acting by the Authority of, and in Subordination to, the Legiſlature. Thus the Act of Parliament requiring the Subſcription of the *Thirty-nine Articles*, the Acts of Uniformity, and the Act of Toleration, the King's Injunctions, the Canons of Convocation confirmed by the King, the Sentences of the Delegates, and the Determinations of the Houſe of Lords, conſtitute the Church of *England*; and the Members thereof are good and true Members, who conform their Belief and Practice to the ſeveral Particulars aforeſaid: As, on the other Side, they fall ſhort of being good and true Members, who recede from any Particular eſtabliſhed and ſettled as aforeſaid.

Nor can thoſe be truly ſaid to agree with and conform to, a Church, who do not agree with and conform to it in the Senſe intended by the Makers of the ſeveral Conſtitutions of the Church. This laſt is ſo plain a Truth in itſelf and ſo manifeſtly implied in taking all Oaths and making Subſcriptions and Declarations that it would have been needleſs to have obſerved it, had it not been for the Equivocation and Jeſuitiſm of ſo many of our Prieſts, who think that they may take Oaths, and make Subſcriptions, in Senſes contrary to, and different from, the Intention of the Impoſers; and yet be good, and true, and perfect Members of the Church.

II. Now the High-Churches, which differ from this Eſtabliſhment, are *Three* in Number, which I ſhall rank under the Names of the moſt remarkable Leaders in them: 1. Dr. *Bungey*'s High-Church. 2. Mr. *Leſley*'s High-Church. 3. And Dr. *Brett*'s High-Church. The two laſt are in an open Separation from one another as well as from the true Church of England. But Dr. *Bungey*'s High-Church has as yet made no Separation from the *true Church*. He and his People are only *Schiſmatics in* the Church (as were thoſe upon whom St. *Paul* charged

* *A Name frequently given to the late Dr.* CHEVERELL.

ism, when they were met together in the Church, 1 *Cor.* xi. *v.* 18.) being, as his ent Grace of *Canterbury* * deſcribes ſome h-Church Prieſts, "a new Sort of Diſci-inarians riſen up among ourſelves, who em to comply with the Government of e Church, as others do with that of the tate; not out of Conſcience of their Duty, any Love they bear to it, but becauſe ey cannot keep their Preferments without They hate our Conſtitution, and revile ſuch as ſtand up in good Earneſt for it; d yet, for all that, go on to ſubſcribe and ail." Which Paſſage, from ſo great an Au-ority, cannot be too often quoted.

BUT to proceed to the Deſcription of theſe High-Churches, in their Order.

Dr. *Bungey*'s High-Church ſtands diſtin-ed from the *true Church of* England, by *Arminian* Doctrines, contrary to our old odox *Calviniſtical* Articles; by their En-to the Act of Toleration, and to the iples on which it is grounded; by their ng an independent Power in Prieſts to Laws, and govern the Church; which trary to the Laws of *England*, that place Power of making Church-Laws in other

* *The late* Dr. WILLIAM WAKE.

Hands, and particularly contrary to the Oa
of Supremacy, which makes his Majesty s
preme Head of the Church; by teaching
Doctrines of Hereditary Right, and Passive O
dience, contrary to the Judgment and Pr
tice of the Legislature at and since the Re
tion, and to the *Determination* of the Hous
Lords, on the Impeachment of Dr. *Sache*
and their *Condemnation* of the *Oxford* Dec
and by a Spirit of Faction against the pr
Establishment in State, and against his Maj
Measures; by Rebellion and Perjury; by
charitableness to all Foreign, and more e
cially to Domestic Protestants; and by
implacable Fury and Malice towards all D
senters among us, besides *Jews* and Pa
In which they act contrary to the known
Principles of our Church; to its Opinio
all Foreign Protestant Churches, which it eth
true Churches; to its Principles, which al
to preserve Liberty and Property; and
known charitable and peaceable Temper, and
gard to tender Consciences.

2. THE Second High-Church is Mr.
ley's High-Church. At the *Revolution*
ral Bishops, who were deprived by Act of
liament for not taking the Oaths to the
vernment, made an open Separation from
C

urch of *England*; and pretended, that they their Adherents were the Church, charging e who filled their Sees with being Uſurpers, ſetting up Altar againſt Altar; and alſo ging them, and their Adherents, together all the other Biſhops, Clergy, and Laity, joined in the ſame Communion with the ping Biſhops, with *Schiſm*. Hereby alſo diſtinguiſh themſelves in Principles from Church of *England*; which, being a legal bliſhment, aſſerts to the Legiſlature (which a Right to preſerve their Peace) a Right to ive Biſhops for Crimes againſt Law. They not indeed ſo much diſtinguiſh themſelves Principles from Dr. *Bungey*'s Church, as do from the true Church of *England*: the Doctor's Church equally contends Mr. *Leſley*'s Church againſt the Parlia-'s Right to deprive Biſhops, and calls it rpation on the Rights of the Church; but or Submiſſion to ſuch uſurped Exerciſe of er; and contends Schiſm to be on the of thoſe, who ſeparate on a Principle of nding the Rights of the Church, againſt an rpation of thoſe Rights.

THIS new ſeparate Church agrees with *Bungey*'s Church, in the other Principles re-mentioned, which dtſtinguiſh the Doc-

tor's Church from the true Church of *Engl*
But in point of Honeſty, or Adherence to th
Principles, it greatly differs from the Doctor
Church; which goes on to *ſubſcribe*, and ſwe
and practiſe contrary to what they do ſubſcri
and ſwear; Mr. *Leſley*'s High-Church honeſ
practiſing, in ſeveral reſpects, according to
villainous Principles.

3. PROCEED we now to Dr. *Brett*'s Hig
Church. Soon after King *GEORGE*'s A
ceſſion to the Crown, the Biſhops of the la
mentioned High-Church did all, except on
aſſemble in a Synod, where they reſolved u
on making *Four Alterations* in the Common
Prayer-Book: 1. *To mix Water with*
Wine in the Sacrament. 2. *A Prayer for*
Dead. 3. *A Prayer for the Deſcent of*
Holy Ghoſt upon the Bread and Wine in
Sacrament. 4. *An Oblatory Prayer,*
goes upon the Ground that the Euchariſt i
proper Sacrifice. All which Dr. *Brett* is
only an Advocate for, as an Author, but (p
haps) as *Titular* Archbiſhop of *Canterbu*
exerciſed his Authority in injoining. This
ſplit the laſt High-Church into Two Church
Dr. *Brett*, and his Followers, adhering to
Biſhops, or Church-Governors, of their Church
in Behalf of Wine and Water, *&c.* and M
Leſ

Lesley, and his Followers, adhering to one Bishop only, in Behalf of *Wine*, &c. contrary to the Determination of their own Bishops, and all their own Principles, about the Authority of Bishops and Clergy.

To render my Account of our several High-Churches of *England* more complete, I shall, by way of Supplement, observe, that there is a Distinction in Dr. *Bungey*'s Church; and his High-Church may be divided into Two High-Churches. Some of his High-Church are Swearers to the Government, and say the Church Prayers for his Majesty King *George* and his Family, continuing at the same time disaffected to him, and Enemies to his legal Title. Others of the Doctor's High-Church are *Non-swearers*; and though they come to the Church, disown joining with the *Swearers* in the Prayers for the King and his Family; which Practice of theirs the profound Mr. *Dodwell* has defended in a Book, (whose Title I shall, upon Memory, venture to give the Reader) intituled, *A further Prospect of the Case and View*; *proving that it is our Duty to be present at sinful Prayers, made sinful by Mistake of fallible Superiors, who have a Right of imposing Prayers.* So that I think, the High-Churches of *England* may not improperly be

reckoned *Four* in Number; which may be justly distinguiſhed by Things, as well as by Names of Men, after the following Manner.

I. THE Swearing and Forſwearing High-Church.

II. THE Non-ſwearing High-Church, that contends for being preſent at the *ſingle Prayers* of the Church.

III. THE Non-ſwearing Wine and Water Church.

IV. THE Non-ſwearing No Water Church.

C.

NUMBER LI.

Wedneſday, January 4. 1721.

An Analogy *between* Ancient Heatheniſm *and* Modern Prieſtcraft.

AS Extremes meet in a Point, and Corruption in terreſtrial Bodies is the next State from Perfection; ſo all the Commands and Denunciations of Heaven have not been able to keep the Chriſtian Prieſthood, in moſt Countries, from running headlong into the Superſtitions and Follies of the *Gentile* Idolaters. By a ſtrange Sort of Fatality, they have jumped in the ſame Thoughts, and played over and over again the ſame Tricks; inſomuch that if we but make ſmall Allowances for the conſtant Alterations of Time, and ſuch as muſt neceſſary reſult from different Languages and Faſhions, the preſent *Romiſh* Churches might be

eaſily miſtaken for Heathen Temples, and the Services performed in them for *Pagan* Worſhip.

THE Devil, as ſubtle and cunning as he is repreſented to be, with all the Aſſiſtance of corrupt Prieſts, has not been able to find out a new Device; but has ever danced the Hay, and made his Rounds within the ſame Circle. The ſame Arts and Stratagems have been always made uſe of to ſeduce and delude Mankind; the ſame Advantages taken of their Weakneſſes and Paſſions, and in all Times equally applied to deſtroy true Religion, advance the Prieſthood, and make the honeſt and induſtrious, but unthinking, Part of the World, the Prey and Property of Hypocrites and Impoſtors.

THE All-powerful, All-wiſe, and All-merciful God himſelf, is too often repreſented, like the Heathen Deities, to be revengeful, cruel, capricious, impotent, vain, fond of Commendation and Flattery; and, in Effect, ſubject to all the other Paſſions and Imperfections of the weakeſt Men: His Being, which is boundleſs as Extenſion, and which the whole World cannot contain, is pretended to be confined to ſingle Structures, and narrow Edifices built with Hands; nay, to Parts of thoſe Edifices

where

where he is ſuppoſed to be pleaſed and gratified, like frail Mortals, with coſtly Furniture, gilded Roofs, engraven and poliſhed Marble, fine Carving, and other curious, though baubling Workmanſhip of Mechanics and Artificers.

I CONFESS I am not wiſe enough to find out any eſſential Difference between the preſent and the old *Roman* Worſhip: They both dedicate their Temples to dead Men and Women, whom the Papiſts call Saints, and the Pagans called Demi-Gods and Goddeſſes: The Pagan Forms of *Hocus Pocus*, which they called Conſecrations, were intended to conjure and call down their Deities to inhabit perſonally their Temples, their Images, and Idols: The Popiſh Prieſts conſecrate their Churches for the ſame Purpoſe, namely, to obtain the more immediate Preſence of the Deity: Like the old *Romans* too, they erect Altars in their Temples, where they worſhip Saints with Supplications, Tears, Grimaces, antic and diſtorted Faces and Geſtures, Muſic, and Ceremonies, and tender Offerings and Oblations to them; and, like the others, often make Proceſſions, Cavalcades, and Shews in their Honour; and ſometimes go in Pilgrimages to them, to obtain their Favour.

THE Popiſh Prieſts have profaned the plain and ſimple Direction of our Saviour to his Diſciples, for commemorating the Benefits which we have received by his Death, by turning it into an old *Roman* Sacrifice: Amongſt them, the Pipers and Harpers were the Fore-runners of the Shew; and before the modern Sacrifice, the Organs ſtrike up a Tune: There the Prieſts went up to the Altar in a white Garment free from Spots (being an Emblem of Innocence); in new *Rome*, the Prieſt wears a white Surplice: The Heathen Prieſt turned about to the *Eaſt*, being the Region of the riſing Sun, and bowed; the Popiſh Prieſt does the ſame: The Horns of the Beaſt ſacrificed were marked with Gold, and his Blood received in Golden and Silver Veſſels; here the pretended Chriſtian Sacrifice of the real Body and Blood of Chriſt is poured into the ſame coſtly Cups, or laid upon as rich Plates and Diſhes. The old *Roman* Altar was raiſed by ſeveral Steps above the Floor of their Temples; ſo is the preſent: The Prieſt, amongſt them, made a crooked Line with his Knife from the Head to the Tail of the Victim; the Popiſh Prieſt plays Tricks of *Legerdemain* with his Fingers over the Elements: Laſtly, when the Beaſt was conſecrated and killed, the Heathen Prieſts regaled themſelves upon

upon what was left, after their Gods were ſerved; the *Romiſh* Prieſts make it profane for any Layman to drink of the conſecrated Wine, or for any one even to eat the Bread but the Communicants.

THE old *Romans* had different Orders of Prieſts, with different and diſtinct Offices and Revenues; the *High-Prieſt*, the *Luperci*, the *Augurs*, the *Haruſpices*, the *Pontifices*, the *Flamines*, *Salii*, *Feciales*, the *Duumviri*, *Decemviri*, *Quindecimviri*, the Keepers of the *Sibylline Books*, the *Corybantes*, &c. The preſent *Romans* (beſides the ſeveral Sorts which are in Uſe and Faſhion amongſt us) have a *Pope*, *Cardinals*, *Dominicans*, *Franciſcans*, *Jeſuits*, *Carmelites*, *Benedictines*, *Carthuſians*, *Capuchins*, *Ciſtercians*, *Obſervantines*, *Auguſtines*, *Servites*, &c. In Imitation alſo of the Veſtal Virgins, in old *Rome*, they have founded ſeveral Orders of Nuns, who take a Vow of Chaſtity, for the Breach of which they are immured, as the others were buried alive: And as they had a Right to deliver from the Hands of Juſtice any Malefactors, whom they caſually met in their Walks; ſo the preſent *Romiſh* Prieſts claim and exerciſe an equal Right to protect all Criminals who can fly to them for Pro-

Protection, which is borrowed from that of the old *Roman* Aſylums.

THE old *Romans* had their *Dies faſtos & nefaſtos*, their Faſts and Feaſts, their *Sacrificia*, their *Epula's*, their *Feria's*, in Honour of their Gods and Demi-Gods; the preſent *Romans* alſo make Diſtinctions of Days a great Part of their Religion; they too have their *Dies faſtos & nefaſtos*, their ſtated Faſts and Feaſts in Honour of their Saints, or to commemorate and condole paſt Misfortunes, or rejoice over ſignal Succeſſes; and ſome of their Feaſts, and particularly their Carnivals, exceed in Lewdneſs and Prodigality the *Bacchanalia* of the Antients.

THE Heathens had their *Deos tutelares*, to whom the Defence of certain Countries was committed; and their *Deos Præſides*, who had the Safe-guard of particular Cities: The Papiſts have Saints who ſupply the ſame Offices. Artificers and Profeſſions have alſo their particular Saints, who preſide over them; Scholars have their Saint *Nicolas*, and Saint *Gregory*; Painters, Saint *Luke*; as Soldiers and Lovers had formerly their *Mars* and *Venus*: Diſeaſes too have their Saints to cure them; as the Pox, Saint *Roque*; the Falling-Evil, Saint *Cornelius*; the Tooth-ach, Saint *Apollin*: And

even

even Beaſts and Cattle have theirs; Saint *Loy* is the Horſe-leech, and Saint *Antony* the Swine-herd.

As the Heathen Prieſts would ſuffer none to come into their Sanctuaries but themſelves; neither will the Popiſh Prieſts permit any Layman to come within the Rails of the Altar, and profane with unhallowed Feet that holy Place. As the Antients obliged all, who were initiated into their Myſteries, to confeſs, under the moſt ſevere Denunciations, all the Secrets of their paſt Lives; by which means they were ſo much in their Power, that they never afterwards durſt blab out what they ſaw, nor give the leaſt Oppoſition to their Deſigns; ſo the *Romiſh* Prieſts truſt their Myſteries only to the *vere adepti*, (their truſty Aſſociates) and have made the ſame Uſe of Confeſſion (the Loſs of which is ſorely lamented by others): For they oblige, upon the Penalty of Damnation, all their Votaries to confeſs not only their private Sins, but ſecret Thoughts, as well as every thing elſe they know of other Peoples, which may any way regard the Intereſts of their Order; and ſo have Poſſeſſion and faſt Hold of all Families, and become acquainted with all the Deſigns, which may ever thwart their Pride; and conſequently have ſecured their own Domination,

and

and the People's Miſery, beyond almoſt a Poſſibility of Redreſs.

LASTLY, As the Heathen Prieſts ſacrificed Goats to *Bacchus*, for browſing his Vines; and Men to *Pluto* and *Proſerpine*, and other angry Deities, to appeaſe their Wrath, and avert Evils from themſelves; ſo the Popiſh Prieſts ſacrifice and devote their Enemies, under the Names of *Heretics* and *Schiſmatics*, to the infernal Fiend: And as thoſe Idolaters were allowed to know when was the moſt proper Time to make their Sacrifices to their Deities, and what Victims would be moſt acceptable to them, as being preſumed to underſtand beſt the Minds of their provoked Gods; ſo the preſent ones are in Poſſeſſion of the ſole Judgment of what is Hereſy, and of ſacrificing by that means whom they pleaſe to their Ambition and Revenge; which equally ſubjects the unhappy Laity to them.

THEY have alſo imitated the Heathens in making every human Foible and Imbecillity, as well as every common and uncommon Appearance in Nature, contribute to their Intereſts; which ſhall be the Subject of my next Paper.

T.

NUM-

NUMBER LIII.

Wedneſday, January 11. 1721.

Prieſtly Empire *founded on the* Weakneſſes *of* Human Nature.

THERE is not a living Creature in the Univerſe, which has not ſome innate Weakneſs, or original Imbecillity, co-eval with its Being; that is, ſome Inclinations, or Diſguſts, ſome peculiar Deſires or Fears, which render it an eaſy Prey to other Animals, who, from their conſtitutional Sagacity or Experience, know how to take Advantage of this Infirmity; of which it would be needleſs, as well as endleſs, to enumerate Particulars. My Purpoſe is only to ſhew, that all the Dignity of Human Nature, and the Superiority which Almighty God has given to Man above other Beings, has not exempted him

him from this Imperfection; which probably was left in his Fabric, to put him in Mind of his Mortality, to humble his Pride, and excite his Diligence.

THE peculiar Foible of Mankind is Superſtition, or an intrinſic and panic Fear of Beings inviſible and unknown. It is obvious to every one, that there muſt be Cauſes in Nature for all the Good or Evil which does, or ever can, happen to us; and it is impoſſible for any Man ſo far to diveſt himſelf of all Concern for his own Happineſs, as not to be ſolicitous to know what thoſe Cauſes are: And ſince, for the moſt part, they are ſo hidden and out of Sight, that we cannot perceive or diſcover them by our own Endeavours, we conclude them to be immaterial, and in their own Nature inviſible; and are, for the moſt part, ready to take their Accounts, who have the Dexterity to make us believe, that they know more of the Matter than we do, and that they will not deceive us.

TO this Ignorance and Credulity, joined together, we are beholden for the moſt grievous Frauds and Impoſitions, which ever did, or do yet, oppreſs Mankind, and interrupt their Happineſs; namely, for the Revelations and Viſions of Enthuſiaſts, for all the forged Religions in

in the World, and the Abuſes and Corruptions of the true one; as well as all the idle and fantaſtical Stories of Conjurers and Witches, of Spirits, Apparitions, Fairies, Demons, and Hobgoblins, Fortune-tellers, Aſtrologers, and the Belief in Dreams, Portents, Omens, Prognoſtics, and the ſeveral Sorts of Divinations; all which, more or leſs, diſturb the greateſt Part of the World, and have made them the Dupes and Property of Knaves and Impoſtors in all Ages.

EVERY thing in the Univerſe is in conſtant Motion, and where-ever we move, we are ſurrounded with Bodies, every one of which muſt, in a certain Degree, operate upon themſelves and us; and it cannot be otherwiſe, but in the Variety of Actions and Events, which happen in all Nature, that ſome muſt appear very extraordinary to thoſe who know not their true Cauſes. Men naturally admire what they cannot apprehend, and ſeem to do ſome ſort of Credit to their Underſtandings, in believing whatever is out of their Reach to be ſupernatural.

FROM hence perpetual Advantages have been given to, and Occaſions taken by, the Heathen and Popiſh Prieſts, to circumvent and oppreſs the credulous and unwary Vulgar.

What

What fraudulent Uſes have been made of Eclipſes, Meteors, epidemical Plagues, Inundations, great Thunder and Lightnings, and other amazing Prodigies, and ſeeming Menaces of Nature? What juggling Tricks have been, or may be, acted with Glaſſes, Speaking Trumpets, Ventriloquies, Echoes, Phoſphorus, Magic-Lanterns, *&c.* in the ignorant Parts of the World? The *Americans* were made to believe, that Paper and Letters were Spirits, which conveyed Mens Thoughts from one to another; and a dancing Mare was, not many Years ſince, burnt for a Witch in the Inquiſition in *Portugal.*

NATURE works by a thouſand Ways imperceptible to us: The Loadſtone draws Iron to it; Gold, Quickſilver; the ſenſitive Plant ſhrinks from the Touch; ſome Sorts of Vegetables attract one another, and twine together; others grow farther apart; the treading upon the Torpedo affects, and gives raging Pains to, our whole Bodies; Turkey-cocks and Pheaſants fly at a red Rag; a Rattle-ſnake, by a ſort of magical Power in his Eyes, as it is ſaid, will force a Squirrel to run into his Mouth; Muſic will cure the Bite of a *Tarantula*; the Frights and Longings of Women with Child will ſtamp Impreſſions upon the Babes within them;

them; People, in their Sleep, will walk ſecurely over Precipices, and the Ridges of Houſes, where they durſt not venture when awake; Lightning will melt a Sword without hurting the Scabbard.

THERE is ſomething within us, which we all feel, that baffles and gets the better of our beſt Reaſonings and Philoſophy; and this ſhews itſelf in Love, in Fear, in Hatred, Ambition, and almoſt every Act of the Mind; but in nothing ſo much as in Superſtition: Sometimes we find a ſecret Panic, and at other times a ſtrange and uncommon Energy, or Feeling of a mighty Power within us; and not being able to account, by any Conduct of Reaſon, or other Cauſes in Nature, for ſuch Perceptions, we are eaſily perſuaded to believe them to be ſupernatural. Hence great Philoſophers, Poets, Legiſlators, famous Conquerors, and often Madmen, have been thought in many Ages, by themſelves as well as others, to have been inſpired; and even Diſtempers, ſuch as Apoplexies, Epilepſies, prophetic Fits and Trances, have been deemed miraculous.

NOTHING ſtrikes ſo ſtrongly upon our Senſes, as what cauſes Surprize and Admiration: There are very few Men, who are not affected with unuſual Sounds and Voices, with the

the Groans of others in Miſery, the Solemnity of a Coronation, or any public Shew, the Pomp of a Funeral, the Farce of a Proceſſion, the Power of Eloquence, the Charms of Poetry, the rich and ſplendid Equipage of great Men, or the ſolemn Phiz and Mien of an Enthuſiaſt. Whoever therefore can find out the Secret of hitting luckily upon this Foible and native Imbecillity of Mankind, may govern them and lead them as he pleaſes. And herein has conſiſted the greateſt Skill and Succeſs of crafty Prieſts in all Ages: They have made uſe of this Power to turn us and wind us to all their Purpoſes, and have built and founded moſt of their Superſtitions upon it; and conſequently, have ever adapted their Worſhip rather to catch our Paſſions, than convince our Minds, and enlighten our Underſtandings; all which is directly contrary to the Spirit of Chriſtianity, and the Precepts of our Saviour, as ſhall be fully ſhewn in the next Paper.

FOR this Reaſon the Heathens built their Temples in Groves, in ſolitary, dark and deſart Receſſes, by or over Caverns and Grottoes, or in the Midſt of echoing and reſounding Rocks, that the hideous and diſmal Aſpect, and often hollow and hoarſe Bellowing of ſuch

Places,

Places, might ſtrike a ſolemn Awe, and religious Horror, into their Votaries; and ſometimes help their Imaginations to hear Voices, and ſee Forms, and ſo intimidate and prepare them for any Stories and Impreſſions, which they ſhould think it their Intereſt to make.

THE Popiſh Prieſts have admirably well aped theſe their Predeceſſors; by building their Churches dark and diſmal, with figured and painted Windows, to let in a falſe and glimmering Light; arched and contrived in ſuch manner, as to reſound the Voice hollow and ſhrill; with many private Apartments, Cœmeteries for their Saints, proud Inſcriptions, whiſpering Places, ſecret Chapels for Confeſſions, ſaying Maſſes, Dirges, Penances, *&c.* Like the Heathens too, they build their Temples ſolemn and magnificent, in antique and uncommon Figures, adorn them with Silver and Gold, rich Carpets, curious Statues, and Images ſtuck about with Jewels; and their Prieſts appear in gaudy Veſtments, and fantaſtical Robes and Caps, and perform their Worſhip with Muſic, and affected Ceremonies; all which Pageantry and Farce is calculated and intended to act upon the Paſſions, attract the Eyes, amuſe, lull and ſuſpend the Underſtanding, and draw Admiration and Reverence to thoſe who preſide in

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theſe haughty Fabrics, and this pompous Adoration: Their Bells too, which call the People together, are contrived to emit ſuch Sounds as affect the Minds of moſt People with a ſort of ſuperſtitious Melancholy.

INDEED, as the *Romiſh* Prieſts are more numerous, have vaſtly larger Revenues, and more Leiſure, ſo they have greatly improved upon the Heathens in this Art of deceiving; inſomuch that there is ſcarce an Imperfection or Error of Human Nature, which is not adopted into their Scheme, and made ſubſervient to their Intereſt. Men of ſprightly Genius and Courage are caught by their Ambition, and highly honoured, flattered, and raiſed up by their general Voice to the higheſt Dignities, and then are indulged in their Paſſions, and gratified with Confeſſors, who are not only to overlook or pardon, but aſſiſt them in their vicious Pleaſures; by which Arts thoſe great Talents, inſtead of being nobly employed to free Mankind from ſacerdotal Uſurpations, are meanly perverted to ſupport and aggrandize the Monkiſh Empire.

MEN of violent and impetuous Tempers are ſuitably employed to execute their tyrannical Deſigns, and to take Vengeance of their Enemies; and the Debauched and Wicked are made

de to buy their Peace of Heaven, by giving oney and Lands to the Prieſts; but none con-ute ſo much to advance their Syſtem, as ionaries and Enthuſiaſts: There are, in all ountries, Multitudes of People, whom Igno-ce, Pride, Conceit, ill Habit of Body, me-holy and ſplenetic Tempers, unfortunate cumſtances, cauſeleſs and ſecret Fears, and panic Diſpoſition of Mind, have prepared be the Objects, as well as Inſtruments, of luſion, and they have been ever made uſe of ordingly.

SOME of theſe are thruſt or decoyed into gious Houſes, or perſuaded to lead retired, cluſe, and auſtere Lives, and to torture and niſh themſelves with Whippings, Penances, ing, and to walk bare-foot, in order to aſto-the gaping Multitude, and thereby gain erence to the Prieſthood, for their fanſied lineſs; whilſt the governing Eccleſiaſtics and riot in delicious Banquets, ride in State Coaches and Six, attended by numerous ants in coſtly Liveries; and Earth and Sea nſacked, and Heaven itſelf profaned, to main-their Luxury and Pride.

SUCH amongſt them as are diſpoſed to hear es, and ſee Forms, ſhall hear and ſee enough hoſe, which are real ones, and afterwards

be made uſe of to divulge them; and in ord
to it, their Sanctity ſhall be proclaimed abro
and their mad and incoherent Speeches be c
led Revelations, heavenly Diſpenſations, a
incomprehenſible Myſteries. Such crazed a
fanatical Men and Women have been
Founders of moſt of the Colleges, Monaſteri
and Nunneries of the *Romiſh* Church, (to
nothing of others) and their Follies and Mad
been the Support of the Papal Dominion.

BUT this artificial Devotion, this mechan
Religion, has nothing to do with Chriſtiani
which is natural Religion reſtored and improv
and conſiſts in Virtue and Morality, and in be
uſeful and beneficent to one another, as I
ſhew in my next Paper,

THE Prophets have taught us the ſame l
ſon: The Firſt Chapter of *Iſaiah* fully ſh
that Religion does not conſiſt *in Sacrifices,*
Burnt-offerings of Rams, and the Fat of
Beaſts, in the Blood of Bullocks, and of La
and of He-Goats, in vain Oblations, In
New-Moons, Sabbaths, and calling of A
blies, in appointed Feaſts, or many Pra
but in doing Good to Mankind. The P
phet ſums up our Duty in theſe Words, C
to do Evil, learn to do well, ſeek Judg
relieve the Oppreſſed, judge the Fath

ad for the Widow; for, as another Prophet *s, What doth the Lord require of thee, O n, but to do juſtly, and to love Mercy, and walk humbly with thy God?* Micah, *chap. v.* 8.

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Wedneſday, January 18. 1721.

what only true Religion *conſiſts.*

I HAVE undertaken in this Paper to prove, what, methinks, ſhould want no Proof; namely, that the All-powerful God is not a whimſical and humorous Being, that go- his Creatures by Caprice, and loads them arbitrary and uſeleſs Burdens, which can no good Purpoſe in Nature.

THE Almighty is infinitely happy in his own Perfections, and cannot receive Pleaſure from ſuch Things or Actions, as only the weakeſt Men are fond of, and the wiſeſt contemn. He is not capable, like Mortals, of being ruffled by Accidents, or ſurpriſed by Diſappointment. Wiſdom, Goodneſs, and Felicity, are eſſential to his Being; and conſequently, he could have no View in creating Mankind, but their own Happineſs; for we can neither add to his, nor take away from it.

IT is abſurd therefore to ſuppoſe, that there can be any Merit in bare Opinions, and abſtract Speculations; or in the Performance of idle, different and uſeleſs Actions; or, indeed, that any thing can be Part of true Religion, but what has a Tendency to make Men virtuous and happy. The Father of Mercies will not perplex our Minds, or burden our Bodies, with any thing that ſignifies nothing.

MOSES indeed gave to the *Jews a temporary Law, a Law of Bondage; a Yoke which neither they, nor their Poſterity, could bear; Statutes which were not good, and Judgments by which they could not live.* But theſe were given them *for the Hardneſs of their Hearts, and as Puniſhments for their manifold Sins and Iniquities.* And beſides, they were only to

a Time, and afterwards give way to a ſimple, e, and perfect Law, to a ſpiritual, innocent, undefiled Religion; free from their own fond perſtitions, and the ſtale Idolatries of the *Gen-s*; not loaded either with Prieſts, Sacrifices, Ceremonies; a Religion, which was to conſiſt *Spirit and in Truth*, and intended to make n wiſer and better.

IT ſeems plain to me, that there is but one icle of Faith in all this Religion, and that ntial to the very Being of it; namely, that *us is the Meſſiah:* Without this preliminary nowledgment, his Miſſion could not have owned, nor his Precepts obeyed; which nothing elſe but Exhortations to Love, and ections for ſocial Happineſs; and which he enforced, by annexing eternal Rewards to Obſervance of them. Hitherto Virtue had ected its Reward in this Life; but our Saviour new Sanctions to it, by *bringing Life and ortality to Light*.

THERE is no Propoſition in all Scripture e evidently revealed, or laid down in more ive and expreſs Terms, than that the Con-on of this Truth was the Baſis and Support Chriſtianity, the great Thing requiſite to be ved: Every thing elſe is practical Duty, and ief is no farther concerned in it, than as it

produces Practice. For before we can think ourſelves obliged by a Precept, we muſt be ſatisfied of its Reaſonableneſs, or of the Legiſlator's Authority.

THE World has been ſo long corrupted by Superſtition, and deluded and abuſed by ſelfiſh and lying Prieſts, who taught Wickedneſs for Virtue, and Nonſenſe for Philoſophy, and placed Devotion in fooliſh Ceremonies and Sacrifices, and in ridiculous Cringes, antic Veſtments, and Grimaces, that nothing leſs than a Divine Legiſlator, with the Power of Miracles could reſtore Men to their Senſes, and to Natural Religion. The ſole Article therefore that our Saviour made neceſſary to be believed, was That he came from God, and acted by the Authority of God. Then every one would ſee the Impoſſibility, that he could deceive or miſlead Men; and conſequently would take his Word for every thing elſe, in the Senſe which he underſtood it.

AND this Proceeding was agreeable to eternal Reaſon; namely, to make nothing neceſſary in Belief, which was not neceſſary to Practice; for, what Purpoſe could be ſerved in obliging Men to believe, or rather to ſay that they believed, myſterious and unintelligible Propoſitions? Such Articles are only the Watch-words of

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Party, and can never be the Objects of real Aſſent; for no Man can be ſaid to believe what he does not underſtand, and has not ſuitable Ideas of, as far as his Belief goes. We muſt underſtand the Meaning of every Term in a Propoſition, before we can aſſent to it, or diſſent from it: for Words, of which we do not underſtand the Signification, are the ſame to us as if they had no Signification at all. How much therefore more honeſt and prudent would it be to own, at firſt, our Ignorance concerning certain abſtruſe Speculations, than to form Propoſitions about them, pretend to define and explain them, and then confeſs, that we do not underſtand our own Definitions and Explanations; and call out Hereſy and Atheiſm, when we are deſired to ſpeak intelligibly, and tell what we mean!

BUT to the Proofs from Scripture: *John* iii. 18. ſays, *He that believeth in him is not condemned; but he that believeth not, is condemned already.* And *v.* 36. *He that believeth on the Son, hath everlaſting Life; and he that believeth not on the Son, ſhall not ſee Life.* And chap. vi. 40. *Every one who ſeeth the Son, and believeth on him, may live eternally.* And *v.* 51. *I am the living Bread which came down from Heaven; if any Man eat of this, he ſhall live for ever.*

And *Acts* x. 43. *To him all the Prophets bear Witneſs, that through his Name, whoever ſhall believe in him, ſhall receive Remiſſion of Sins.* And *chap.* xvi. *v.* 31. *And they ſaid, Believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be ſaved, and thy Houſe.* And *Rom.* chap. x. *v.* 9. *If thou ſhalt confeſs with thy Mouth the Lord Jeſus, and ſhalt believe in thine Heart, that God hath raiſed him from the Dead, thou ſhalt be ſaved.* 1ſt Epiſtle of *John*, chap. iv. *v.* 2, 3, and 15. and chap. v. *ver.* 1. to the ſame Purpoſe.

THESE, with many more plain and direct Texts, make only this Article neceſſary to be believed, and ſuperſede all others. Nor is this required of us, barely becauſe it is true, or to gain adventitious Honour to the Deity, who wants not the Applauſe of poor mortal Men; for ſuch Belief could ſignify nothing: But it was required of us to obtain Obedience to his Commands, and direct our Practice, to promote virtuous Actions, and the Principles which produce them. *John* chap. v. *ver.* 24. *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, He that heareth my Word and believeth on Him that ſent me, hath everlaſting Life.* And chap. viii. *v.* 31. *Jeſus ſaid to thoſe* Jews *which believed on him, If ye continue in my Word, then are ye my Diſciples indeed*

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So that Faith in Chriſt is not enough, unleſs we obey his Word; or rather, we cannot be truly ſaid to believe in him, whilſt we reject his Commandments. Firſt Epiſtle General of St. *John*, chap. ii. *v.* 3, 4, 5. *And hereby we do know, that we know him, if we keep his Commandments: He that ſaith, I know him, and keepeth not his Commandments, is a Lyar, and the Truth is not in him. But whoſo keepeth his Word, in him verily is the Love of God perfected: hereby know we, that we are in him.*

LET us therefore ſee what are thoſe Commands, in the Obſervance of which Chriſtianity conſiſts. It does not conſiſt in the Obſervance *of Days, nor Months, nor Times, nor Years*, Gal. iv. 10. And *Rom.* xiv. *v.* 5. *One Man eſteemeth one Day above another, another Man eſteemeth every Day alike: Let every Man be fully perſuaded in his own Mind.*

IT does not conſiſt in poſitive Inſtitutions, in Forms and Ceremonies, 1 *Cor.* chap. vii. *v.* 19. *Circumciſion is nothing, and Uncircumciſion is nothing, but keeping the Commandments of Chriſt.* And *Gal.* vi. *v.* 15. *In Chriſt Jeſus, neither Circumciſion availeth any thing, nor Uncircumciſion, but a new Creature.* Gal. v. *ver.* 6. to the ſame Purpoſe.

IT does not conſiſt in Meats nor Drinks, in Fiſh nor in Fleſh. 1 *Cor.* chap. viii. *v.* 8, 9. *Meat commendeth us not to God; for neither if we eat, are we the better; nor if we eat not, are we the worſe. But take heed leſt this Liberty of yours become a Stumbling-block to them that are weak.* And *Rom.* xiv. *v.* 17. *The Kingdom of God is not Meat nor Drink; but Righteouſneſs, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt.*

IT conſiſts not in long Prayers, nor in many Prayers. *Matth.* vi. *v.* 7, 8. *When ye pray, uſe not vain Repetitions, as the Heathens do; for they think they ſhall be heard for their much ſpeaking. Be ye not therefore like them; for the Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask.* Indeed, it ſeems plain to me from this Text, as well as from the Reaſon of the Thing, that Prayer itſelf becomes chiefly a Duty, as it raiſes our Minds, by a Contemplation of the Divine Wiſdom, Power and Goodneſs, to an Acknowledgment of his repeated Bounties to Mankind; and as it diſpoſes us to an Imitation of thoſe high Perfections, and to be merciful and beneficent to one another. For it is abſurd to ſuppoſe, that we can direct the All-wiſe Being in the Diſpenſations of his Providence; or can flatter or perſuade him out of

his eternal Decrees. If therefore any Texts in Scripture ſeem to carry a contrary Implication, I conceive that they ought to be underſtood with the ſame Allowance as thoſe are, which ſpeak of God's Hands and Feet, and of his being ſubject to human Paſſions.

IT does not conſiſt in Sacrifices performed n pompous Churches, and magnificent Buildings, or in conſecrated Trinkets. *Acts* xvii. *v.* 24, 25. *God, that made the World, and all things therein, ſeeing that he is Lord of Heaven and Earth, dwelleth not in Temples made with Hands, neither is worſhipped with Mens Hands, as though he wanted any thing, ſeeing he giveth to all Life and Breath, and every thing.* Acts vii. *v.* 48, 49, 50. *The moſt High dwelleth not in Temples made with Hands. Heaven is his Throne, and Earth is his Footſtool. What Houſe will ye build to me, ſaith the Lord; or where is the Place of my Reſt? Hath not my Hand made all Things?*

HIS Being is univerſal, not confined to Churches, Chapels, Choirs, nor Altars; but his Preſence is every-where alike, and not more immediately in one Place than another. *Acts* xvii. *v.* 27, 28, 29. *He is not far from every one of us: For in Him we live, and move, and have our Being, as certain alſo of your own Poets have*

ſaid, For we are his Offſpring. Foraſmuch therefore as we are the Offſpring of God, we ought not to think, that the Godhead is like unto Gold, or Silver, or Stone graven by Art, or Man's Device.

THE Almighty has no favourite Opinions, Sects and Nations. *Acts* x. *v.* 34, 35, *And* Peter *opened his Mouth, and ſaid, Of a Truth, I perceive that God is no Reſpecter of Perſons; but in every Nation he that feareth him, and worketh Righteouſneſs, is accepted of him.* Rom. ii. *v.* 11. *There is no Reſpect of Perſons with God.* Coloſ. iii. *v.* 11. *There is neither* Greek, *nor* Jew, Circumciſion, *nor* Uncircumciſion, Barbarian, Scythian, Bond, *nor* Free, *but Chriſt is all, and in all.* Gal. iii. *v.* 28. *There is neither* Jew *nor* Greek, *there is neither* Bond *nor* Free, *there is neither* Male *nor* Female; *for ye are all one in* Chriſt Jeſus.

HOW therefore ſhall we worſhip him? how know his Will? St. *John* tells us, *chap.* vii. *v.* 17. *If any Man will do God's Will, he will know of the Doctrine, whether it be of God or not:* That is as much as to ſay, "Make "uſe of the Judgment which God has given "you; and ſee whether the Doctrine taught "you, be worthy of an omnipotent Author; "ſee whether it teach Peace and Love to your "Neigh-

" Neighbour, Compaſſion to all in Diſtreſs,
" Forbearance of Injuries, Humanity and In-
" dulgence to all who differ from you, Duty
" to Parents, Submiſſion and Obedience to the
" Laws of your Country, and Charitableneſs
" and Benevolence to all Mankind, and even
" to the Brute Creation; then you may be ſure
" ſuch Doctrine comes from God: But if it
" breathe forth Revenge, and implacable Ha-
" tred; if it raiſe Mobs, Civil Wars, and Per-
" ſecutions, for trifling Opinions; if it have
" for its End Ambition and worldly Pride,
" and overturn every thing ſacred and civil,
" which ſtands in its Way; if it encourage
" the worſt Men, and oppreſs the beſt; if it
" diſcourage Induſtry, and depopulate Na-
" tions; then there are plain Traces of *Sa-*
" *tan's*, or the Popiſh Prieſt's Foot in it,
" and ſuch a Religion can never come from
" God."

WHEN you have made this your beſt Uſe of the Faculties which God has given you, your Endeavours will certainly be accepted by him; and you will meet all the Reward which attends the judging right, ſince you have done all in your Power to do ſo; for God puts upon no Man the *Egyptian* Task of making Bricks without Straw; nor requires any thing which

you cannot perform. *Rom.* chap. ii. *v.* 10, 12. *Glory, Honour, and Peace, to every Man who worketh Good, to the Jew firſt, and then to the Gentile: for as many as have ſinned without Law, ſhall be puniſhed without Law; and thoſe that have ſinned in the Law, ſhall periſh by the Law.* And *v.* 14, 15. *For when the* Gentiles, *which have not the Law, do by Nature the Things of the Law, they are a Law unto themſelves: Which ſhew the Work of the Law written in their Hearts; their Conſcience alſo bearing them Witneſs; and their Thoughts the mean while accuſing, or elſe excluſing, one another.*

So that the *Gentiles* themſelves are to be judged by their Sincerity, and not condemned for involuntary Errors. *Rom.* xiv. *v.* 10, 11, 12, 13. *Why doſt thou judge thy Brother? As I live, ſaith the Lord, every Knee ſhall bow to me, and every Tongue ſhall confeſs to God; ſo then every one of us ſhall give an Account to God. Let us not, therefore, judge one another any more.* And, *v.* 22. we are told who will be judged to Happineſs; *Happy is he who condemneth not himſelf in that Thing which he alloweth.* Firſt Epiſtle General of St. *John* ch. iii. *v.* 21. *Beloved, if our Hearts con-*

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demn us not, then have we Confidence towards God.

CORNELIUS, though a Heathen, is commended in *Acts* the xth, *ver.* 2. as *a devout Man, and one that feared God with all his Houſe, which gave much Alms to the People, and prayed to God always:* And *Lydia*, a Seller of Purple, though neither a *Jew* nor a *Chriſtian*, is ſaid to be a *Worſhipper of God*, and one *whoſe Heart God had opened*, before ſhe heard the Preaching of *Paul*, *Acts* xvi. *v.* 14.

THIS comprehenſive Charity, this Spirit of public Beneficence, runs every-where through the new Teſtament; nor can I find any Precept there given, but what is manifeſtly advantageous to Mankind, conducing to their preſent Happineſs, and deducible from eternal Reaſon, and the Reſult of it. *Matth.* xxii. *v.* 35, to 39. *A Lawyer asked of our Saviour, Which is the great Commandment of the Law? And Jeſus ſaid unto him, Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Mind. This is the firſt and great Commandment: And the ſecond is like unto it; Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thyſelf. Upon theſe two Commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.*

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ANOTHER Lawyer asks him, (*Luke* x. 25. to 28.) *What ſhall I do to obtain eternal Life? And he ſaid unto him, What is written in the Law? How readeſt thou? And he ſaid, Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Soul, and all thy Strength, and all thy Mind, and thy Neighbour as thyſelf. And he ſaid unto him, Thou haſt anſwered right; do this, and thou ſhalt live.* And chap. xviii. *v.* 18, and 20, *&c. A certain Ruler asked him, ſaying, Good Maſter, what ſhall I do to inherit eternal Life? And Jeſus ſaid, Thou knoweſt the Commandments: Do not commit Adultery, do not kill, do not ſteal, do not bear falſe Witneſs; honour thy Father and thy Mother.* He indeed adds afterwards another Condition, which was *to ſell all he had, and give it to the Poor*; which the Ruler could not bring himſelf to comply with: though I dare ſay he would have promiſed to have believed Creeds by the Dozen, if thoſe would have done him any Service. But I cannot find, that in all Scripture, our Saviour does impoſe upon us the Belief of one modern Creed, or of any other but that, *He was the Meſſiah.*

CHAP. xix. *v.* 8, 9. Zaccheus, *a Publican, ſaith unto the Lord, Half of my Goods I give unto the Poor; and if I have taken any thing from*

from any Man by falſe Accuſation, I reſtore him fourfold: And Jeſus ſaid unto him, This Day is Salvation come unto thy Houſe; without asking him one Queſtion about his Faith.

ROM. xiii. *v.* 8, 9. *Owe no Man any thing, but to love one another; for he that loveth another, hath fulfilled the Law: For this, Thou ſhalt not commit Adultery, Thou ſhalt not kill, Thou ſhalt not ſteal, Thou ſhalt not bear falſe Witneſs, Thou ſhalt not covet, and if there is any other Commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this Saying, namely, Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thyſelf.* The ſame Doctrine, in another Place, is thus ſhortly deſcribed; *By this all Men ſhall know, that ye are my Diſciples, if ye love one another.* So that the Love of God, and of our Neighbour, is the whole Duty of a Chriſtian. The firſt implies the Worſhip of God, or rather is the true and very Worſhip of God *in Spirit and in Truth*; and the latter comprehends all the moral and ſocial Virtues. 1ſt Epiſtle of *John*, chap. iv. *v.* 7, 8. *Beloved, let us love one another, for Love is of God; and every one that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is Love.* Verſe 16. *God is Love; and he that dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.* And chap. v. *ver.* 3.

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St. *John* defines what the Love of God is, namely, *For this is the Love of God, that we keep his Commandments.*

THIS appears ſtill more evident, when we examine, for what Virtues and Crimes Men will be rewarded and puniſhed eternally. Matth. chap. xxv. *v.* 31, *&c. When the Son of Man ſhall come in his Glory, and all the holy Angels with him, then ſhall he ſit upon the Throne of his Glory, and before him ſhall be gathered all Nations; and he ſhall ſeparate them one from another, as the Shepherd divideth the Sheep from the Goats; and he ſhall ſet the Sheep on the Right-hand, and the Goats on the Left. Then ſhall the King ſay to them on the Right-hand, Come, ye Bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, from the Foundation of the World; for I was an hungred, and ye gave me Meat; I was thirſty, and ye gave me Drink; I was a Stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye cloathed me; I was ſick, and ye viſited me; in Priſon, and ye came unto me. Then ſhall he ſay alſo to them on the Left hand, Depart from me, ye Curſed, into everlaſting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me no Meat; I was thirſty, and ye gave me no Drink; I was a Stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and*

ye

ye cloathed me not; ſick, and in Priſon, and ye viſited me not.

BUT the Want of Faith is here objected to no Man: No one is rewarded, or puniſhed, for believing, or not believing, in Tranſubſtantiation, Conſubſtantiation, or the Real Preſence; in Predeſtination, or Free-will; or for having, or not having, right or wrong Conceptions of the Trinity in Unity, the Incarnation, Hypoſtatic Union, infinite Satisfaction, *&c.* Nor is the divine Right of Biſhops, Presbyters, and Tithes, once mentioned. Not a Word about Obedience to ſpiritual Sovereigns, and Eccleſiaſtical Princes, or about our receiving the Sacraments from a regular Prieſt, deſcended in a right Line from the Apoſtles.

SUCH a Religion as this, which I have deſcribed, is agreeable to the Divine Juſtice; which does not puniſh any Man for ſpeculative Opinions, and eſpecially for Opinions, which neither do Good nor Hurt to any one, and for Opinions which no one can help.

THIS is a Religion every way worthy of its eternal Author; and we may know *by the Doctrine, that it comes from God.* It is a Religion for Men of Senſe, for Philoſophers, for honeſt Men; and comprehenſible too by the meaneſt Vulgar, without a Guide; a Religion of

of Reaſon, free from the blind Mazes, and ſtudied Intricacies, of Popiſh Prieſts, and beneficial to Society at firſt View. It deſpiſes apiſh Geſtures, and external Buffoonery; and effectually prevents, and puts an End to, all inhuman Fierceneſs, and holy Squabbles, ever occaſioned by the ſelfiſh Religions of corrupt Prieſts. It leaves not unhappy Men in perpetual Doubts and Anxieties, nor toſſes and tumbles them, for Relief, out of one Superſtition into another; but eſteems them all alike.

IN ſhort, this is a Religion, which every wiſe and honeſt Man would wiſh to be Religion; a Religion of Charity, the *Religion* of JESUS; and this is the INDEPENDENT WHIG's *Religion*.

T. *and* G.

THE CRAFTSMEN: A SERMON, OR PARAPHRASE, upon ſeveral Verſes of the xixth Chapter of the *Acts of the Apoſtles.*

Compoſed in the Style of the late DANIEL BURGESS.

Nihil rerum mortalium tam inſtabile ac fluxum eſt, quam fama potentiæ non ſua vi nixæ.
TACIT.

The SIXTH EDITION.

M.DCC.XLII.

ADVERTISEMENT.

WHAT gave Occaſion to the following Sermon, was the Threats of a moſt Reverend Prelate, and ſome of his Brethren, to ſuppreſs the Independent Whig, *which then came out Weekly, by an Inquiſition very extraordinary, and unknown to our Conſtitution. To defeat therefore ſuch a Prelatical and Unchriſtian Deſign, and, if poſſible, to ſhame the Authors of it, with other fierce and intereſted Bigots, out of all Methods of Violence in Matters of Religion and Opinion, this Sermon was compoſed and publiſhed, with no ill Succeſs.*

THE CRAFTSMEN.

A SERMON, *or* PARAPHRASE, *upon ſeveral Verſes in the* 19*th Chapter of the* Acts of the Apoſtles.

I SHALL not this Day, my Beloved, as the uſual Manner is, accoſt you with the Scraps of a Verſe, or only with a whole Verſe, out of any Part of the Goſpel; which Method is often made uſe of in ſuch Places as this, purely to avoid telling what goes before, or comes after; but ſhall chuſe for my Text the greateſt Part of the xix*th* Chapter of the Acts: And in diſcourſing upon this Portion of Scripture, ſo fruitful in good Inſtructions and Examples, I ſhall confine myſelf to the following Method.

I. FIRST, I ſhall make ſome general Obſervations upon the Behaviour of the Apoſtle *Paul* in his Miniſtry.

II. SECONDLY, I ſhall diſcourſe more particularly upon ſeveral Verſes in this Chapter. And,

III. THIRDLY, and Laſtly, I ſhall draw from the Whole, ſome uſeful and ſeaſonable Inferences, and then conclude.

I. I SHALL make ſome general Obſervations upon the Apoſtle *Paul*. And firſt of all, my Brethren, it is note-worthy, that *Paul* made the greateſt Change that ever Man did, even from a Perſecutor to an Apoſtle; two Characters as oppoſite as is that of *Lucifer* to an Angel of Light. As ſoon as Light from the Lord fell upon him, he no longer breathes *Threatnings and Slaughter againſt the Diſciples of the Lord*, as he had in Fore-time, nor puts in Execution the Orders he had about him from the High-Prieſt, or Archbiſhop of the *Jews*, to bring the firſt Chriſtians and Diſſenters of those Days bound to *Jeruſalem*. On the contrary, though he was juſt before an hard-hearted Perſecutor for the Church by Law eſtabliſhed, on a ſudden, he becomes a Lover of the Saints, and now, *Behold, he prayeth!* Acts ix. 11.

1*ſt*, LET us learn a Leſſon from hence, dearly Beloved, as we go along; namely, that as ſoon as the Fear of the Lord entereth into a Man's Heart, the Sword of Perſecution dropeth out of his Hand. Peace, which is the Badge of the Goſpel, and Cruelty, which is the Coat of Arms of *Satan*, cannot dwell together. *Behold, he prayeth!*

2*dly*, IT is obſervable, that when a Zealot leaves his Party, and turns Chriſtian, how very apt the High Party are, ungratefully to forget all his former wicked Merit, which made him dear to them; and to perſecute him for apoſtatizing into Mercy and Grace. While *Paul* continued the fiery Flail of the Godly, the Prieſts held him in high Favour, and truſted him with their *Eccleſiaſtical Commiſſion*: And for what? *Why, to bring bound to* Jeruſalem *all thoſe of this Way*: Of what Way? Why, all that forſook the *eſtabliſhed Synagogue*, and followed Chriſt.

3*dly*, OBSERVE, my Brethren, that Conſcience and Non-conformity had the Powers of the World againſt them ſeventeen hundred Years ago. *Paul*, the Blaſphemer, had a Poſt; but *Paul* the Convert, *Paul* the Saint, is allowed no *Toleration*; yea, *they watched the*

Gates Day and Night to kill him; for, *Behold, he prayeth!*

4*thly*, IT is obſervable from the whole Hiſtory of *Paul*, that the Grace of God makes a Man both meek under Sufferings, and bold for Chriſt. Here our Convert neither returns the Injury, nor ſlacks his Pace in planting the Goſpel; both hard Tasks! He riſqued his Life, and laboured in the Vineyard, without Pay; a rare thing in this our Day! when the firſt Motive for overſeeing of Souls, is ſo much a Year. The Apoſtle drove no Bargain about Preaching, nor made a Market of Salvation.

OH! my Beloved, how many dignified Drones have we in our Time, who ſet up for a Likeneſs to the Apoſtles, without any Likeneſs; who take great Sums for Mock Apoſtleſhip, when nothing thrives by their Miniſtry, but their Bellies! This, my Friends, is lamentable, but it is lamentably true.

II. I HASTE now to my ſecond general Head, and will diſcourſe particularly upon ſeveral Verſes in this Chapter.

I BEGIN with Verſe the 8th, *And he went into the Synagogue, and ſpake boldly for the Space of three Months, diſputing and perſuading the things concerning the Kingdom of God.*

1ſt,

1*ſt*, *AND he went into the Synagogue.* Obſerve we here, 1*ſt*, my beloved Brethren, that as great Bigots as the *Jews* were, and as great a Diſſenter as *Paul* was, yet they ſuffered him to preach in their Synagogues or Churches. He had a clear Stage, though perhaps not equal Favour. Now think ye, my Friends, if the ſame Apoſtle ſhould come among us here in *London*, at this time, that he would be permitted to preach in his own Church, unleſs he firſt qualified himſelf according to the Forms and Ceremonies of the Church of *England* by Law eſtabliſhed? Or would he, trow ye, get any Preferment, that the black Dons could hinder him from, in caſe he perſiſted to preach what his Maſter preached before him; namely, that *Chriſt's Kingdom was not of this World*?

2*dly*, MY Beloved, we may ſee here the great Point of *Paul*'s Preaching; *He diſputed and perſuaded the Things concerning the Kingdom of God.* Not a Word of his own ſpiritual Dominion; not a Word of Epiſcopal Sovereigns, who were to deſcend, as it were, from his Loins, and who, without his Inſpiration or Miracles, were to ſucceed him in what he never had; worldly Wealth, worldly Grandeur, and worldly Power; Things which always

mar the Kingdom of God, inſtead of promoteing it; there being no Fellowſhip between Chriſt and *Belial.*

LET us now proceed to the 9th Verſe, and ſee what that ſays; ***But when divers were hardened,*** (obſerve he ſays, *when divers were hardened*) ***and believed not, but ſpake Evil of that Way before the Multitude, he departed from them, and ſeparated the Diſciples, diſputing daily in the School of one*** Tyrannus.

THE Prieſts, no doubt, who traded in Ceremonies, and knew nothing of Jeſus Chriſt, or of inward Holineſs, were nettled at a new Religion, which taught Men a plain Path to Heaven, without the Incumbrances of Sacrifices, or Prieſts, or Fopperies; a Religion, that had a profeſſed Enmity to all ſecular Gain, and all holy Trifling.

MARVEL not at it, my Brethren; a Religion without a Hierarchy, and Godlineſs without Gain, will never pleaſe any Set of High Prieſts: Nothing will go down with them but Pride and Grimace, and the ready Penny. Poor *Paul* had nothing about him of all this, nor did he teach a Religion that had. All that he brought, was a Chriſt crucified, and Salvation in and through him. ***They therefore ſpake Evil of that Way before the Multitude***; that is, the

the Prieſts told the People, that *Paul* was an Heretic, and his Doctrine was Schiſm; but for themſelves, they had Antiquity and the Fathers on their Side, with an Orthodox Church full of decent Types and Ceremonies.

THERE needed no more to prevent the Apoſtle from doing any Good among them: *So he departed from them.* This was all the Puniſhment he inflicted on them, and this was enough. He who had the Holy Ghoſt, could have inflicted Death or Miſery on them; but it was oppoſite to the Genius of his Religion, which allows ſpiritual Paſtors to feed their Flocks, but not force them, nor to puniſh them, if they refuſe to feed. If a Man has not a Mind to be ſaved, he has the worſt of it himſelf; and what is it to the Prieſts? as Maſter *Selden* well remarketh.

THIS, my Brethren, was the primitive Excommunication. If you could work no Good upon a Man; or if that Man worked Miſchief to you, or gave you Scandal; why you would not keep Company with him. But to give him to the Devil, becauſe he was already going to the Devil of himſelf, is to be a Miniſter of Chriſt the backward way. Beſides, there was no need of it. The Apoſtle, in my Text, neither curſes theſe unbelieving High-Church-

men, *who hardened themſelves* againſt him, nor cenſures them, nor fines them; all which he who had the Power of Miracles, could have done, had he liked it. He barely *departed from them.* And if he did not damn them for the Sake of their Souls, ſo neither did he ſurrender them to *Beelzebub* for the Sake of their Money. He demanded not a grey Groat of them; ſo far was he from telling them, *Gentlemen, I am your Spiritual Prince; pray pay me my Revenues. Paul* was a Witneſs of the Reſurrection, a diſintereſted Witneſs, and claimed no Dues; though others ſince do in his Name, without being real Witneſſes of the Reſurrection, or diſintereſted Witneſſes of any thing elſe about it.

DISPUTING daily in the School of one Tyrannus. Mark here, my Beloved, that both Schools and Synagogues, or Churches, were open to him, though he was but a new Comer, and a Non-conformiſt. Mark, moreover, that he barely *diſputed*, or *reaſoned.* He was a Stranger to the Doctrine of *Compulſion.* He was an Apoſtle, by virtue of whoſe Words and Power, all Clerical Acts are pretended to be done ever ſince: And yet he himſelf did none, ſatisfying himſelf with ſaving Souls by Exhortation, and the Aſſiſtance of the Spirit, which

which are not *Clerical Acts*. He was the chief Paſtor upon Earth, and held his Commiſſion immediately from God; but he impoſed nothing but his Advice, Reaſon, and good Words, upon thoſe that heard him. He could have forced them (had the Spirit ſo directed) to have ſwallowed implicitly all that he ſaid; and either deſtroyed or diſtreſſed all who refuſed. But the Lord Chriſt, my Brethren, in his Dealings with Human Kind, never uſes Means that are *inhuman*.

HERE you may diſtinguiſh the Spirit of Chriſt from the Spirit of *High-Church*. For trow ye, my Friends, that Chriſt or his Apoſtles ever delegated to weak and paſſionate Men Powers and Privileges, which, infallible and inſpired as they were, they never aſſumed to themſelves? Let us wonder, my Brethren, at the Impudence of ſome Men in Black!

AND this continued for the Space of two Years. Obſerve, it is not ſaid, that he kept a Curate all the while.

LET us go on to ſome following Verſes: *And God wrought ſpecial Miracles by the Hands of* Paul; *ſo that from his Body were brought unto the Sick Handkerchiefs or Aprons, and the Diſeaſes departed from them, and the evil Spirits went out from them*, ver. 11, 12.

OBSERVE, here are certain Signs of a Power from God; and they who pretend a Power from him, without manifeſting the ſame by certain Signs, are certainly Cheats and Impoſtors. For a Power given by the all-wiſe God, muſt be given for ſome certain End, which will infallibly be brought about. It is not conſiſtent with his Wiſdom and Goodneſs to give it, and yet leave uncertain, that he has given it, when a plain Manifeſtation of it is of the utmoſt Importance to the World, and to the Purpoſes for which it is given. If a Man bring not infallible Proofs of his Power, how ſhall I know, that he has it? Demonſtration muſt go before Conviction, and Conviction before Conſent. We cannot embrace for Truth, what we take to be a Lye. All which will farther appear from the following Verſes.

THEN certain of the vagabond Jews, *Exorciſts, took upon them to call, over them which had evil Spirits, the Name of the Lord Jeſus, ſaying, We adjure you by Jeſus, whom* Paul *preacheth*, ver. 13.

WE may perceive here, that the Apoſtles had Apes in their own Time; Fellows who ſet up for their Succeſſors, before they themſelves were dead. They were *Exorciſts* or *Conjurers*, ſo called, I preſume, from their pretending

tending to diſpoſſeſs haunted Houſes, by the dint of Spells and Forms of Words. They had now got a new *Form of Words*, and were going to work with them as faſt as they could, boaſting, no doubt, great things of their own Power. And indeed they took a politic Method to reſemble the Apoſtle, had they ſucceeded in it; but they miſcarried miſerably, as will be ſhewn anon.

BUT what ſhall we ſay of ſome Moderns, (more ſhameleſs than theſe vagabond *Jews*) who will, right or wrong, be Succeſſors to the Apoſtles, without doing any thing that is Apoſtolic, but what every reaſonable Man may do as well? They ſhew no Signs but thoſe of Graceleſneſs and Pride; and do no Wonders, but in the Luxury of their Lives.

AND there were ſeven Sons of one Sceva, *a* Jew, *and Chief of the Prieſts, which did ſo*; v. 14. More Mimickers of Miracles! We ſee the Trade was growing ſweet, but the Sauce proved ſour; for the *evil Spirit anſwered and ſaid*, Jeſus *I know, and* Paul *I know; but who are ye?* An angry and contemptuous Queſtion, but full of good Senſe. But the worſt follows: *And the Man in whom the evil Spirit was, leapt upon them, and prevailed againſt*

them, ſo that they fled out of that Houſe naked and wounded.

1. OBSERVE here, firſt, That we may eaſily learn what Power Men have from God, by their Power over the Devil. When *Paul* gave the Word of Command, the Devil did not ſtand ſhilly-ſhally, nor pretend to parly with one who was employed as the Lord's General againſt the *Power of Darkneſs*, but was forced to march Bag and Baggage; and glad, no doubt, that he could troop off in a whole Skin.

BUT it is quite otherwiſe, when Interlopers and *Craftſmen*, in Hopes to make a Peny of *Satan*, pretend to drive him out of his Quarters, though they come in the Name of the Lord. The Devil, in this Caſe, ſets up the Flag of Defiance, and tells them they are Scoundrels to their Faces; *Who are ye?* Well ſpoken, *Satan!* They were *Vagabonds*, *Jews*, and *Prieſts*, and the Devil chaſtized them accordingly: *They fled out of that Houſe naked and wounded.* The Devil got the Day, and remained Maſter of the Field and the Baggage: *He prevailed againſt them.* They forged a Commiſſion, and the Lord Jeſus, whoſe Name they abuſed, would not ſtand by them.

2. LET

2. LET us here, 2*dly*, my Friends, think it no Shame to learn a Leſſon from the Devil, and take no Man's Word, who pretends to command us in Matters of Faith, and ſpiritual Obedience, though he come in the Name of the Lord. Let us examine him firſt, and try our own Strength upon him. *Who are ye?* A pat Queſtion, and a proper! Let us, Beloved, never loſe Sight of it, eſpecially when any Man would controul our Belief. Be not determined by outſide Shape and Colour. A long Gown may cover an *Exorciſt*, but let us peep into his Inſide, ſearch his Life and Principles; let us try whether he is an Apoſtle in his Heart, and his Actions; and if he be not, let us deſpiſe him; yea, let us *prevail againſt him.*

3. OBSERVE, 3*dly*, What great and ſolemn Rogueries are carried on in the Name of Chriſt and his Apoſtles; even Conjurers and Formaliſts reap their Harveſt, as it were, with the Sickle of the Goſpel. And if ſuch bold Cheats could be practiſed, as it were, under this great Apoſtle's Noſe; what may not be done now he is ſo far off? How many *Exorciſts*, how many Sons of *Sceva*, trow ye, have we at this time among us, and in this enlightened Proteſtant Country? Great Numbers, God wot! yea, great Societies. Every Man, who, in the Name

Name of Chriſt or *Paul*, claims to himſelf Gain or Dominion, is a Son of *Sceva*, and can be no Guard againſt the Devil, who deſpiſes him. Judge ye now what Swarms we have!

4. OBSERVE from hence, 4*thly* and laſtly, The true Reaſon of the great Wickedneſs which is in the World, namely, becauſe we maintain an Army againſt the Devil, of whom he ſtandeth not in Awe. In the firſt Ages he was driven out of every Corner, and now he poſſeſſes every Corner; for why? they had Apoſtles, and we have *the Sons of* Sceva.

AND many that believed came, and confeſſed, and ſhewed their Deeds, v. 18. that is, many who had been deluded and miſled by theſe Reverend Deceivers, were now undeceived.

AND many alſo of them which uſed curious Arts, brought their Books together, and burnt them before all Men; and they counted the Price of them, and found it Fifty thouſand Pieces of Silver, v. 19.

How fertile muſt the World then have been in myſterious and conjuring Books! What Syſtems of Nonſenſe and Knavery muſt have been here! What Gloſſes, Commentaries, and Riddles! For we may be ſure, my Beloved, theſe were not Books of uſeful Knowledge and Learning, or Books that taught Virtue and Morality,

Morality, ſince ſuch, without doubt, the Apoſtle would have preſerved: But they were juggling and conjuring Books, ſuch as contained Heathen Traditions, with falſe Miracles, and falſe Doctrines, and were probably full of metaphyſical Diſtinctions, and the controverſial Divinity of thoſe Days; ſuch as Bundles of fooliſh Sermons, Pagan Syſtems, Articles of their Faith, Formularies, lying Myſteries, Cabaliſtical Nonſenſe, and the High Church Pamphlets of that Age; all oppoſite to the divine Truths uttered by *Paul.*

SO mightily grew the Word of God, and prevailed, v. 20. Take Notice here, Men and Brethren, that the ready way to make the Word of God grow and prevail, was to burn all the Prieſts Books. Oh, my Beloved, that our Eyes were alſo opened! What Fuel ſhould we have for Bonfires!

NOTHING occurs remarkable between this and the 23d Verſe, which tells us, that *the ſame time there aroſe no ſmall Stir about that Way.* And then follows the Reaſon, *v.* 24, 25, 26, 27. *For a certain Man named* Demetrius, *a Silverſmith, which made ſilver Shrines for* Diana, *brought no ſmall Gain unto the Craftſmen, whom he called together, with the Workmen of like Occupation, and ſaid, Sirs, ye know*

know that by this Craft we have our Wealth: Moreover, ye ſee and hear, that not alone at Epheſus, *but almoſt throughout all* Aſia, *this* Paul *hath perſuaded and turned away much People, ſaying, That they be no Gods which are made with Hands; ſo that not only this our Craft is in Danger to be ſet at nought; but alſo that the Temple of the great Goddeſs* Diana *ſhould be deſpiſed, and her Magnificence ſhould be deſtroyed, whom all* Aſia *and the World worſhippeth.*

A NOTABLE Speech, and a fair Confeſſion! He kept a Shop for the Deity, and got a World of Money by this godly Trade; and rather than loſe it, he will oppoſe Chriſtianity, and maintain his Craft againſt Jeſus Chriſt.

THIS mechanical Prieſt, and his Brethren, Retainers to *Diana*, had loſt many kind Cuſtomers by *Paul*'s Preaching; their holy Gear began to lie upon their Hands; Folks Eyes were opened, and the Cheat was diſcloſed: Upon which the Reverend Dr. *Demetrius*, and the whole Convocation of Prieſts and Craftſmen, reſolve to accuſe the Apoſtle as *an Enemy to the Church*, and an Underminer of its *Rights* and *Intereſts*. *Sirs*, ſays Mr. Prolocutor, *ye know that by this Craft we have our Wealth.* " Now " if this *Paul* goes on to perſuade People, as he " does,

" does, that all our Gain is built on Deceit,
" and that our Trade is of human Inſtitution,
" our Function will fall into Contempt, and
" we into Beggary."

ALL this was artfully addreſſed to the Intereſt and Avarice of his Brother Craftſmen, who ſharing the Benefit of the Cheat, and living plentifully upon Eccleſiaſtical Revenues of the eſtabliſhed Church of *Diana*, had Motives ſufficient to engage them in the Defence of the ſaid Church and Cheat.

NOW he has a Knack for catching the Bigots, by telling them, what *Danger* there was of the *Church*; and leſt *the Temple of the great Goddeſs* Diana *ſhould be deſpiſed, and her Magnificence be deſtroyed, whom all* Aſia *and the World worſhipped.* What Pity it was, that ſo pure and primitive a Church, and the moſt orthodox and beſt conſtituted Church in all *Aſia*, ſhould be in ſuch piteous Danger!

1. OBSERVE here, firſt, dearly Beloved, what falſe Knaves, and godleſs Infidels, theſe prieſtly Crew were. If they believed, that their Miſtreſs, the Goddeſs, who had indeed the beſt accuſtomed Church in all *Aſia*, was as great as they pretended her to be, why did they miſtruſt her Power to protect her own Grandeur, and defend herſelf? Eſpecially againſt a ſingle Man,

Man, whom they repreſented as an Enemy to the Gods and their Church, and who was conſequently the more eaſy to be defeated or deſtroyed? But if they knew her unable to defend her Divinity, and ſupport her Church, with them, her Prieſts, and Tradeſmen; then were they in Reality Cheats and Unbelievers, though outwardly grave and zealous Votaries.

2. TAKE Notice, in the 2*d* Place, of the wide Difference that there is between theſe High Prieſts Church, and the Bible Church! The Prieſts Church being a Trading Church, and Money being her End, and Grimace her Ware, which were the Source of their Authority and Reverence; whatever enlightened the People, marred the Market of the Prieſts. *By this Craft we have our Wealth:* "While we "can by Bawling and Lying put off our "Trumpery for Religion, it will always ſell "well; otherwiſe, it will not be worth a "Groat; let us contend for our Trumpery, "and cry, *The Church!*" Accordingly we find the Auditory in the next Verſe actually practiſing the Advice given them by this High-Church Preacher, and roaring for *Diana* of *Epheſus*; or, which is the ſame thing, *For the Church. By this Craft we have our Wealth.*

THIS,

THIS, my Friends, was the Spirit of the Prieſts Church, ſo oppoſite to that of the *Bible-Church*; which being founded upon a Rock, fears neither Rain, nor Storms, nor Diſſenters, nor Falſe Brethren; yea, ſhe is ounded upon a Rock, *which Rock is Chriſt*; and whoever truſts in him, and believes the Scripture, cannot think his Church in Danger. Indeed, if his Church is founded upon Hoods, and Caps, and Cringes, and Forms, and filthy Lucre, he may well dread the Judgment of God, and the Reaſon of Man; for they are both againſt him and his *Dowdy*, and his Church will totter as ſoon as ever common Senſe takes it by the Collar. By fearing for the Superſtructure, he owns the Foundation to be ſandy. *By this Craft we have our Wealth.*

THESE *Craftſmen* keep a Rout about the Danger of their Church. Why, my Brethren, it ought to be in Danger, like a ſorry Bundle of Inventions and Gimcracks, as it was. But for the pure, the primitive Church of Chriſt, *the Gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt it.* Yea, the *Craftſmen* ſhall not prevail againſt it, who are the foreſt Enemies which it ever had ---- *It is founded upon a Rock. Paul* does not once complain in all the New Teſtament, that *his* Church was in Danger, nor does any other of the

the Apoſtles or Evangeliſts. *Heaven and Earth ſhall paſs away, but the Word of the Lord abideth for ever.* What ſay our *Craftſmen* to this? Either they know it not, or believe it not. *Paul*, whenever he mentions Dangers or *Perils*, in his *Epiſtles*, means Perils to his own Perſon: Nor did he, by his own Perſon, ever in all his Life, mean the Church. But *Paul* had the Spirit of God; he was no *Craftſman.*

WE, my Beloved, who are Chriſtians, truſt to the Veracity of God, that he will for ever defend the holy Revelation that he has given us. Let us, on our Part, treat it as becomes its Dignity and omnipotent Author. Let us not turn our Religion into a Play, nor diſhonour it with Baubles, as the Manner of the Popiſh *Craftſmen* is, who convert their Churches into Puppet-ſhews and Muſic-meetings; and then, when they are laughed at, cry they are in Danger. Pretty Fellows! to raiſe our Mirth whether we will or no, and then make us choak ourſelves to keep it in. *Their Craft is in Danger to be ſet at nought.* They know its Value, and quake leſt other People ſhould know it too. Oh the Impudence of *Craftſmen!* how boldly they mock God, and in his Name pick Pockets!

3. LET

3. LET us obſerve, 3*dly*, my Brethren, that the Chriſtian Religion, which prevailed againſt all the Powers of the World, cannot be in Danger from all the Powers of the World: And every Church may be in Danger but a Chriſtian Church. Let us praiſe the Lord, my Chriſtian Friends, that our Church is ſafe.

PROCEED we now to the 28th Verſe: *And when they heard theſe Sayings, they were full of Wrath, and cried out, ſaying, Great is* Diana *of the* Epheſians.

1. WE may remark here, 1*ſt*, my Friends, the violent Effects of a hot Sermon, however abſurd and villainous. Here is Dr. *Demetrius*, whoſe Craft was all his Religion, lugs Heaven into a Diſpute about his Trade, and tacks the Salvation of his Hearers to the Gain which he made of his Shrines; yet this awakened no Indignation in the ſeduced and ill-judging Auditory; but ſtrait they *were full of Wrath, and cried out, ſaying, Great is* Diana *of the* Epheſians: The Church! the Church!

2. 2*dly*, WE may remark, that Ignorance is the Mother of Zeal. *They were full of Wrath.* For what? Why for *Diana of Epheſus.* A God created by a Stone-cutter; an inſenſible Piece of Rock, guarded by a Band of Prieſts; who, hard as it was, picked a fine Live-

Livelihood out of it. But *Paul* had opened ſome Mens Eyes, and the Loaves began to come in but ſlowly. This enraged the *Craſtſmen*, and they enraged the People. The Prieſts loſt Cuſtomers, and the People loſt their Senſes. Such is the Power of Deluſion over dark and ſlaviſh Minds! Let but the Prieſt point at a Wind-mill, and cry the Church is falling, his Congregation will venture their Brains to ſtop the Sails. What a rare Army does Zeal raiſe, when Religion and Reaſon do not ſpoil the Muſter, or ſtop their March?

THE next is the 29*th* Verſe; *And the whole City was filled with Confuſion; and having caught* Gaius *and* Ariſtarchus, *Men of* Macedonia, Paul's *Companions in Travel, they ruſhed with one Accord into the Theatre.*

AND the whole City was filled with Confuſion. Who doubts it, when *Church* was the Cry, and the *Prieſts* had begun it? Give them but their Way, and allow them but to aſſert their own Claims, they will quickly turn all things, human and divine, topſy-turvy. Here is a whole City thrown into Confuſion, purely becauſe a Branch of the prieſtly Trade, infamous, forged and irreligious, was like to fall before the Word of God preached by *Paul*.

1*ſt*,

1*ſt*, THIS ſhews, Sirs, that there is nothing ſo lying, and ſo vile, that they will not juſtify. They knew that their Church was a Creature of their own Compoſing; that the Worſhip performed in it was burleſque Worſhip, contrived by themſelves, and paid to a ſenſeleſs Image; and they knew, that the Whole was an impudent Deluſion, framed by human Invention. And yet, you ſee, my Beloved, how they raiſe Heaven and Earth in Defence of their Forgeries and Superſtitions. Not a Tittle will they part with, not a Shrine, not a Ceremony. No, rather than this, they publiſh Lyes, they deceive the People, they decry ſober Piety, they raiſe a Sedition, and confound all things. *By this Craft we have our Wealth.*

2. BEHOLD here, 2*dly*, the different Behaviour of Truth and Falſhood! or, in other Words, of *Paul* and the *Craftſmen!* When Men contend for Truth, they do it calmly, becauſe they are ſure, that it will ſupport itſelf. But Error, conſcious of its weak Foundation, flies inſtantly, for Support, to Rage and Oppreſſion. *Paul* reaſons peaceably and powerfully; *Demetrius* deceives, ſcolds, and raiſes a Mob. But I defy the Craftſmen to ſhew me one Mob of *Paul*'s raiſing in all the New Teſtament.

THE

THE Apoſtle wanted no Mob; he neither blended Politics nor Gain with his Doctrine; he had no factious Deſigns; he meddled not with human Affairs; he taught Peace, and he practiſed it; he had no Grimace to ſupport; no mock Reverence to acquire or defend; he abhorred pious Fraud, and expoſed it; he ſhewed the People the manifeſt Truths of the Goſpel, and of Reaſon, and that preſently opened their Eyes to ſee the impious Deluſions, and bold Impoſitions, of the reigning Prieſts; and hence began the Rage of Dr. *Demetrius* and his Mob.

3. FROM this you may learn, 3*dly*, my Friends, that one Man, with Truth on his Side, is enough to frighten a whole Army, yea, a whole Hierarchy of Craftſmen, and to defeat them, if he has but a fair Hearing. You ſee alſo the graceleſs Methods that red-hot High Prieſts take, to confute ſuch a Man: Firſt, they dreſs him up as an Atheiſt, and an Enemy to the Church, and then ſet the Mob upon him; for the Law was not againſt *Paul*, as we ſhall ſee preſently, and yet they meant to deſtroy *Paul* againſt Law. An implacable Tribe! No Power can ſatisfy them, that has either Mercy in it, or Bounds to it: Craft is their Calling;

Calling, and Lyes, and Violence, the Tools of their Trade.

OH, my Chriſtian Friends! what Wolves are Men, yea, what Wolves are Prieſts, when they have hardened themſelves againſt the Grace of God? Without Meekneſs and Peace there can be no ſuch thing as the Fear of the Lord: Witneſs Dr. *Demetrius*, and thoſe that are like him. Let us pray for their Amendment, that it would pleaſe the Lord to take away their reprobate Mind.

AND having caught Gaius *and* Ariſtarchus, *Men of* Macedonia, Paul's *Companions in Travel, they ruſhed with one Accord into the Theatre.*

GAIUS and ARISTARCHUS, Diſſenters, to be ſure, and Non-conformiſt Preachers! *Men of Macedonia*; Foreigners too, ever the Averſion of High-Church! *Paul's Companions in Travel.* How! bare Companions? Methinks that is ſomething familiar, unleſs perhaps they were Lords Archbiſhops of ſome Country, where they did not reſide. But *Paul*, you ſee, had no ſpiritual Pride, nor received his Fellow-Chriſtians upon the Knee, as ſome who pretend to be his Succeſſors at *Rome*, and elſewhere, do in our Days.

THEY *ruſhed with one Accord into the Theatre.* Ay, they had got their Prey, a Brace of *Non-cons*, and carried them into the Play-houſe to bait them. What hooping and hallooing, I warrant ye, about the two godly Chriſtians! How many Fanatics, think ye, they were called, and Diſturbers of the Peace of *Diana*'s High-Church? Doubtleſs they were charged with writing Books and Papers againſt *Diana*'s Clergy, and the eſtabliſhed Gew-gaws; and perhaps *Paul* was ſuſpected for having a Hand in them, and ſome of his Epiſtles were produced to make good the Charge. Well! here they are, the Prieſts their Accuſers, the Mob their Judges, and Truth their Crime! Men and Wickedneſs are ſtill the ſame; we have ſeen the like in our Times.

AND when Paul *would have entered in unto the People, the Diſciples ſuffered him not*, v. 30. Here is, on one hand, the Boldneſs of a Man, who has God for his Guide; and on the other, the Prudence of Men, who knew the Mercy of Prieſts and Mobs. *And* therefore *certain of the Chief of* Aſia, *which were his Friends, ſent unto him, deſiring him that he would not adventure himſelf into the Theatre* v. 31.

THE

THE 32d Verſe is pregnant with Inſtruction: *Some therefore cried one thing, and ſome another; for the Aſſembly was confuſed, and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together.*

SOME cried one thing, and ſome another. The true Genius of a Rabble, led by their Prieſts and their Paſſions, againſt Peace and againſt Religion! They are united in their Zeal to do Miſchief, but they differ how they ſhall do about it. They are for the *Church*, *Diana's* Church, it is true; and ſhew it by Rage and Noiſe: But they are under no Rules, except the general one taught them by the *Craftſmen*, namely, to be fierce for the Church, againſt the Apoſtle; for the reſt, every Man is his own Maſter, and every Man will be heard firſt.

A RARE Picture of our preſent Mob, headed by one of themſelves in a Gown; I mean, our *Modern Demetrius*. I think the Man is no great *Craftſman*; but he has got *Diana* in his Head, and he himſelf is in the Head of the Rabble: But, as to the Point of Underſtanding, we may throw him and his Rabble together into one ſhort Prayer, and cry with our Bleſſed Lord, when the *Jewiſh* Prieſts were putting him to death, for bearing Witneſs againſt their carnal

Inventions, their Hypocriſy, and their Cruelty; *Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.*

THE Aſſembly was confuſed. There was no Order, no Reaſon, no Moderation among them. The very Type of our High-Church Mob again! *And the more part knew not wherefore they were come together*: that is, though, as I ſaid before, they came determined to do Miſchief, yet they were at a Loſs what Species of it to go about, till their General, the Prieſt, gave them the Word. Oh, my Beloved, let us lament the horrible State of thoſe poor unregenerate Souls, whoſe Paſtors feed them with Poiſon inſtead of the Food of Life, and teach them Rage inſtead of Religion. Take Warning, Sirs, I ſay unto you, take Warning; beware of *Diana*, and her *Craftſmen*; and cleave to your Bibles, as you love your Souls.

AND they drew Alexander *out of the Multitude, the* Jews (the believing *Jews*) *putting him forward. And* Alexander *beckoned with his Hand, and would have made his Defence unto the People. But when they knew, that he was a* Jew, (that is, a believing *Jew*) *all with one Voice about the Space of two Hours, cried out, Great is* Diana *of the* Epheſians! *v.* 33, 34.

W

WAS there ever ſuch a Couple of Twin-Caſes as theirs and ours! Verily, our High-Church Bigots and Ragamuffins are the undoubted Deſcendents of *Diana*'s *Tories* at *Epheſus* ſixteen hundred Years ago. Nor is the Breed one whit mended; they are ſtill the Black-guard of the Craftſmen, blind, outrageous, and loud.

WE too, my Brethren, would, like the good *Alexander* in my Text, make our Defence unto the People; and they will not hear us. Pray mark the different Manner of our diſputing from theirs, and the contrary Arguments we uſe; *we* appeal to the *Bible*; *they* cry *the Church!* and anſwer the Word of the Lord with a Brick-bat: Oh horrible!

GREAT *is* Diana *of the* Epheſians! High-Church for ever! and 'tis likely they ſwore to it. This was the Cry *for the Space of two Hours.* Poor Souls! it was all that they cou'd ſay, and all that their Prieſts had taught them to ſay, *Great is* Diana *of the* Epheſians! Was ever Church more pithily defended! Certainly the *Craftſmen* of our Days have learned their Logic from their *Epheſian* Predeceſſors. *Great* is Diana *of the* Epheſians! I have heard a Sermon a full Hour long upon the ſame Subject, and yet not more ſaid, nor better.

YOU have already, my Beloved, heard two Speeches, one from the *Craftſmen*, and the other from the Mob. Dr. *Demetrius*, being in the Chair, tells his Brethren of the Trade, that *by this Craft* (obſerve, by this Craft!) *they had their Wealth.* This is the firſt Part of his Sermon; and in troth, he puts the beſt Leg foremoſt, and uſes his ſtrongeſt Argument firſt: He fairly puts the Streſs of his Faith upon the *ready Rhino*, and in the very Dawn of his Diſcourſe, ſhews himſelf to be Orthodox. I dare ſay, the whole Convocation was convinced. He has, however, a rare Gudgeon behind for the Mob; and what ſhould that be, trow ye, but a Charge of Hereſy againſt *Paul*? The Apoſtle had the Aſſurance to publiſh, forſooth, that *they be no Gods which are made with Hands*: Terrible Atheiſm againſt the Eſtabliſhed Divinity! and you ſee what a bitter Spirit it raiſed.

THIS, my Friends, was the Prieſt's Speech or Sermon: Now hear the Mob's Speech once more; for it is a Rarity, as we ſay in *Berkſhire*. Why they cried out till their Throats were jaded, *Great is* Diana *of the* Epheſians; and lugged a Couple of painful Diſſenting Miniſters into the *Bear-Garden*, where I am ſorry we muſt

muſt leave them to the Mercy of High-Church Men.

Now, my Chriſtian Friends, you ſhall hear a third Speech, which by its Honeſty, Moderation, and good Senſe, will refreſh you after all the Knavery and Impudence in the *Craftſmen*, and all this Sottiſhneſs and Fury in the People.

AND when the Town-Clerk had appeaſed the People, he ſaid, Ye Men of Epheſus, *what Man is there, that knoweth not how that the City of the* Epheſians *is a Worſhipper of the great Goddeſs* Diana, *and of the Image which fell down from* Jupiter? *Seeing then that theſe things cannot be ſpoken againſt, ye ought to be quiet, and do nothing raſhly: For ye have brought hither theſe Men, which are neither Robbers of Churches, nor yet Blaſphemers of your Goddeſs. Wherefore, if* Demetrius, *and the* Craftſmen *which are with him, have a Matter againſt any Man, the Law is open, and there are Deputies: Let them implead one another*, v. 35, 36, 37, 38.

THIS is the Speech of a Layman, and a Lawyer! Think ye not, my Friends, that he was a Low-Church Man? I wot he was.

SEEING then that theſe things cannot be ſpoken againſt. Right, Mr. Town-Clerk!

their dowdy Image was eſtabliſhed by Law; and if it had been a Broom-ſtick, it would have had the Prieſts on its Side, and muſt have been worſhipped: *Where the Carcaſe is, there will the Ravens be gathered together.*

YE ought to be quiet, and to do nothing raſhly. So they would, if the Prieſts had let them alone. But the *Craftſmen* had goaded their Sides with the Cry of the Church, till the poor Reprobates were ſtark mad.

WHAT Man is there, that knoweth not, &c. Why, every body knew, that Madam *Diana*'s Palace at *Epheſus* had more Superſtition and *Peter* Pence paid to it, and conſequently had a greater Swarm of Chaplains, than all the Divinity-Shops in *Aſia* beſides. She had Men and Money of her Side. What! could not all this ſecure her? No; her Bully-boys were afraid of Jeſus Chriſt, and Two or Three Diſſenting Teachers, his Servants.

AND the Image which fell down from Jupiter. Fell down from *Jupiter!* what great Lyars ſome Prieſts are, my Beloved! They will needs fetch all their Fables, and filthy Ware, out of Heaven itſelf; and yet who has leſs Intereſt there? Their very Ballads and Raree-ſhews are fathered upon Divine Right. Oh Sirs, the brazen Front of ſome Men! The

Town-

Town-Clerk here conforms himſelf to their Manner of ſpeaking: But, take my Word for it, the Man knew better.

THE Image which fell down from Jupiter. As I was juſt now ſaying, all the Prieſts Lumber comes from God; and yet they are ſcared out of their Wits, leſt Man ſhould take it from them; as if God could not defend his own Gifts and Inſtitutions. This prepoſterous Conduct bewrays them. Either they believe not in God; or know that they belye him: Both Caſes, my Brethren, are very common. *Whoſoever feareth the Lord, need not fear what Man can do unto him.*

MR. Town-Clerk proceeds: *For ye have brought hither theſe Men, which are neither Robbers of Churches, nor yet Blaſphemers of your Goddeſs.*

WELL urged, "If the Men are innocent, "why do ye abuſe them? If they preach falſe "Doctrine, why do ye not confute them? If "they come not to your Eſtabliſhed Church, "why do ye not convince them, that they "ought to come? Or, becauſe ye cannot an-"ſwer them, do ye therefore mob them? It "is plain, that the honeſt Men have neither "ſtolen any of your Madam's conſecrated "Trinkets, nor called her Whore."

WHEREFORE, if Demetrius, *and the* Craftſmen *which are with him, have a Matter againſt any Man, the Law is open, and there are Deputies: Let them implead one another.*

BETTER ſtill! This is Reaſoning now; a Practice which the *Craftſmen* do not care for; the Arm of Fleſh is their beſt Argument, and at that too they are generally laid in the Dirt. "Gentlemen, (ſays the Town-Clerk) "it is evident, that ye diſtruſt your Cauſe, by "not truſting the Merits of it to the Law. "All external Advantages are for you; ye are "in your own Town; ye have moſt Friends, "and moſt Money; and let me tell you too, "Gentlemen, ye have moſt Aſſurance; elſe I "ſhould never have found you here bawling "for your Church, and breaking the Law, and, "to your eternal Scandal, beſetting with your "Numbers a few harmleſs Men, whoſe only "Arms lie in the Innocence of their Lives, and "in the Force of what they ſay. If you are "vanquiſhed at theſe Weapons, have the Ho-"neſty to own it, or for Shame be ſilent. If "theſe Men, Gentlemen, ſpeak againſt the "Law, why puniſh ye them not by the Law? "But if ye have no Law againſt them, neither "have they any Tranſgreſſion."

WHAT

WHAT Anſwer, trow ye, did the *Craftſmen*, or their Calves, the Multitude, make to this? Why, verily, ſuch an Anſwer, I gueſs, as they are wont to make to us every Day: I ſuppoſe they damned him for a Whig, and ſo got drunk, and went home.

OH, my Friends, the deplorable Condition of Men that are out of Chriſt! And ſuch are they who take their Religion from the *Craftſmen*. The Worſhippers of *Diana* would have been as outrageous for one of her Beagles, had the *Craftſmen* told them, that the Beagle came down from *Jupiter*. My Brethren, let us cleave to our Bibles; yea, I ſay unto you, let us cleave to our Bibles.

III. I COME now to my third and laſt general Head, namely, to end my Diſcourſe with a ſhort Word of Application; having, as I went along, anticipated myſelf, and made ſeveral Obſervations which would elſe have ariſen patly here.

THE great Inference I ſhall make is, that *Craftſmen*, or *High-Church Men*, are at Odds with Conſcience and Truth, and afraid of them. And indeed, to do them Juſtice, tho', in relation to God and Religion, there is no believing what they ſay; yet, whenever they reaſon from their own Intereſts, they reaſon well:

well: *By this Craft we have our Wealth.* As to their Flouriſh about *Diana*, and her *High-Church*, it has not, in point of Argument, common Senſe in it. All they aſſert is, that all *Aſia* worſhipped her; as if, becauſe *Diana* was then uppermoſt, therefore Jeſus Chriſt ought to have been kept undermoſt. They could not ſtand *Paul*'s Logic; he appealed to Facts, he appealed to Reaſon, he appealed to Conſcience.

THEY therefore (that is, *Diana*'s *High-Prieſts*, or the *Overſeers* of her *Fopperies*, and *Fingerers* of her *Gain*) form a Deſign to oppreſs a Man whom they could not anſwer. There was no bearing it, that Men ſhould be conducted in their Religion by inward Conviction, and the Grace of God, and not by them, who had no Advantage from either, for the Support of their Impoſitions.

BESIDE, if all external Trumpery and Grimace in Religion were certainly ridiculous and vain, as the Chriſtian Religion certainly teaches; if Poſtures, Cringes, Shrines, Muſic, and the like bodily Devotion, were ſo far from ſignifying any thing, that they were a certain and pernicious Contradiction to the ſimple Inſtitution of Jeſus, whoſe Will was fulfilled by believing in him, and living well; then

then were the *Craftſmen* like to be but little reverenced, and to have but little Cuſtom for their Shrines, and their ſmall Wares. A Prieſt dreſſed up in an antic Coat, and making Mouths before a dead Image, would make a merry Figure before the People, inſtead of an aweful one, as formerly; and in the midſt of all their holy Hubbub and Solemnity, a Chriſtian need but ask them one ſhort Queſtion, *Who required theſe things at your Hand?* and they were confounded.

WHAT do they do therefore in this Caſe? Do they defend the Church-gear by Reaſon, or by Reaſon confute *Paul*? No: *Paul* aſſerted, that *they be no Gods which are made with Hands*; the moſt ſelf-evident Truth that ever was aſſerted by any Man. They cannot anſwer it; nor yet will they own themſelves in the Wrong; but they will puniſh the Apoſtle for being in the Right. Well, in order to do this, do they go to Law with him? Not that neither: *Paul* and his Companions had offended no Law: They were peaceable Men, they were loyal Subjects, and good Livers: They were Contenders for Virtue and Piety; and they had not uttered a Syllable againſt *Diana*'s Idol, but what reſulted from the eternal Truths which they delivered.

WHAT

WHAT Courſe then do the *Craftſmen* take with them? Why, a very extraordinary one in itſelf, but very common with them; even the Courſe of unprecedented Power and Oppreſſion. They were chargeable with no legal Crime: All their Offence was, that they enraged the *Craftſmen*, by opening the Goſpel Day-light upon the dark Minds of the miſled Multitude. They therefore ſhew their Rage, and have the innocent Men ſeized, and deprived of their Liberty, without the Shadow of any legal Proceſs againſt them. Nay, it does not appear, that they had yet found a Name for the Crime that they alleged; but the Men were confined at Random, and probably *put to great Charges.*

THIS ſhews their Spirit; and that prieſtly Rage will be gratified over the Belly of Truth, of Innocence, of Humanity, of Law, and of Religion itſelf. It cannot brook the leaſt good Office done to human Kind; all its Abſurdities are ſacred; and yet nothing is ſacred enough to mollify or reſtrain it, ever unforgiving, ever gnaſhing its Teeth. Truth will perpetually be its Foe, and therefore it will perpetually be in a Flame.

AND this ſhews too the Amiableneſs of an oppoſite Spirit; I mean, the amiable Spirit of the

the Goſpel. Where did ever our Bleſſed Saviour, who held all Power in Heaven and Earth, and could command Legions of Angels; where, or when did he, in the midſt of Dangers, Oppoſition, and Abuſes, ever oppreſs or puniſh even his unbelieving and implacable Enemies? Where did ever *Paul*, who had the Power and Aſſiſtance of the Holy Ghoſt, and who had the Power and Aſſiſtance of Miracles; where and when did ever he ſhew any Reſentment to his bittereſt Foes among the *Jews*, or his moſt idolatrous Gainſayers among the *Gentiles*?

AND what Account is to be given for this diametrical Oppoſition between theſe two Spirits; I mean, the Spirit of the Goſpel, and the Spirit of High Prieſts? Why, none but this, that Chriſt and his Apoſtles ſought no Empire but over Wickedneſs and Error, by the ſole Means of Grace, Gentleneſs, and Perſuaſion; and they who have oppoſite Ends to ſerve, muſt bring them about by Deluſion, Violence, and Force. This, I will maintain, is a certain Criterion to mark out Truth and Falſhood, and true and falſe Teachers: And I defy all the Prieſts upon Earth to ſhew, that the internal Religion of Jeſus wants, for its Stay, or its Advancement, the external Influence of worldly Power. It was always pureſt, and flouriſhed moſt,

moſt, when all human Power was againſt it. Slaves and Hypocrites may be made by it; but Religion rejoices in Liberty and Sincerity.

WHEN Men are angry in Defence of their Opinions, and oppreſs for their ſake; let them not belye Chriſt, and ſay, it is for him: but let their Paſſions be made to anſwer for what nothing but their Paſſions can produce. Why muſt Ambition, Avarice, and Revenge, be fathered upon Religion, which abhors them all? Why muſt Bitterneſs and Cruelty be laid at the Door of the Father of Mercies? *Pudet hæc opprobria nobis, &c.*

WE cannot bear ſuch Violence offered to our Reaſon, and our Language, as any longer to hear Things called by wrong and unnatural Names; or to ſee barbarous and impious Actions varniſhed over with holy Colours, and godly Pretences. It gets the better of our Patience, and is an Affront to our Religion. We cannot find *Chriſt* in the Actions of *Belial*; nor can we ſee the *holy Man* in the Oppreſſor. They that would reſemble *Jeſus Chriſt*, muſt do as he did, and not do what he never did; and they who will in any Caſe follow the religious Meaſures taken here by the Idolaters of *Diana*, in the Caſe of *Paul*, muſt forego their Title to Chriſtianity, and argue as theſe Idolaters

ters did, *By this Craft we have our Wealth*: And then the Religion of the New Teſtament will not be profaned in their Quarrel.

BUT why ſeize *Paul*, or any body that belonged to him? Is one Man ſuch a Terror to *many*, that he muſt be puniſhed before it appears, that he deſerved any Puniſhment at all, and before he is heard? Or is it dangerous to hear him? And are they afraid of his Defence in a legal Trial, as much as of his Preaching, and of his Reaſoning?

IT is plain, that downright Oppreſſion, that is, Power without Law, was the whole Scope of their Proceedings, and Revenge their only Motive. It is plain, that *Paul* was not running away: His whole Buſineſs was to publiſh Truth; he was at *Epheſus* on Purpoſe; he did it every Day; he preached in Public; he taught in their Synagogues, he diſputed in their Schools. And he did all this ſo publicly and ſo effectually, that the *Arch-Craftſman* charges him with having *perſuaded and turned away much People.* Ay, that griped; his Reaſoning prevailed, and the Craft was in Danger.

LET us now, my Beloved, mark the very different Situation of *Paul* and his Adverſaries; they were in Poſſeſſion of an eſtabliſhed Church, and of all its Revenues, and of the Superſtition

of

of the People, who run mad for the Church at the Pleaſure of the Prieſt. The Law, no doubt, was partial to them, being made by Men of their own Religion; and the Judges and Magiſtrates were all of the ſame. The People were of Opinion, that their Church was of divine Inſtitution, and that Heaven was on their Side. The Philoſophers, and all they who governed their Schools, and had the Education of Youth, were of that Church, being every one Heathens, except perhaps a few, who judged for themſelves, and could diſtinguiſh Natural Religion, inſtituted by God, from the abſurd Medley of Rituals, invented by the Prieſts. The Chriſtian Religion was as yet but in its Infancy. In ſhort, the *Craftſmen* governed all Things; Earth was in their Poſſeſſion, and Heaven they pretended was their Champion.

HERE are Securities and Advantages enough to put Truth out of Countenance, had Truth been amongſt them. In reality, ſhe wants not ſo many: But Falſhood can never have enough. The *Craftſmen* knew this, and ſhewed that they did ſo, by their outrageous Behaviour.

LET us now view *Paul*, and ſee what terrible Arms he bears, that are ſo frightful to the *Craftſmen*; he was a Stranger, he was a Diſſenter; he had no Equipage to dazzle Peoples Eyes;

Eyes; no pompous Garments to win their Reverence, nor Wealth to bribe their Affections; he ſought no Popularity, by indulging Men in their Vices, or encouraging them in their Errors. In ſhort, all the numerous Advantages of his Adverſaries, the Prieſts, were ſo many Obſtacles and Diſadvantages to him, the Apoſtle. To conclude, he had only Truth on his Side; which rendered him an Over-match for all the Prieſts then in the World. All the Privilege, all the Advantage, which he deſired, was a fair Hearing. This, it ſeems, he had obtained of the Town; and it had its Effect. Here was his Crime, and here began the prieſtly Fury, the fierceſt, the moſt brutiſh of all others.

SHAMELESS Men! Was it not enough, that Reaſon and Religion were both againſt you; and that you would neither be Proſelytes to them yourſelves, nor ſuffer, with your Wills, that others ſhould; but muſt you likewiſe be proclaiming *their* invincible Power, and your own Imbecillity and Nakedneſs, by virulently uſing direct, undiſguiſed Force, to ſtop their Mouths? What Impudence! What Folly!

WHAT! you that boaſted your Conformity to the Law, and your Eſtabliſhment by the Law! you that were the Poſſeſſors of all Scholarſhip! that were Proprietors of the Arts and Sciences,

Sciences, and of the great Endowments given for their Support! you that inſtructed the Young and the Old, and controuled the Conſciences of both! you that were the ſacred Adminiſtrators of Religion! you that ſhut and opened Heaven and Hell! you that were the Privy-Counſellors of the Gods! In the Name of Amazement what could undermine you; what could annoy you? Or, if you are not hurt yourſelves, why do you oppreſs others? By this Method you do but ſhew your cloven Feet: Jeſus *we know*, and Paul *we know*; *but who are ye?*

G.

A LETTER TO A GENTLEMAN AT *EDINBURGH*, CONCERNING

The Buſy and Aſſuming Spirit of the ECCLESIASTICS,

AND

Their Extravagant Demands upon the LAITY.

The THIRD EDITION.

M.DCC.XLII.

A

LETTER

TO A

GENTLEMAN

AT

EDINBURGH, &c.

SIR,

YOU deſire to know ſomething of the preſent Spirit and Conduct of our Clergy; a Curioſity to which you are prompted by the Behaviour of your own, who, you ſay, are ſo zealous for the Welfare of your Souls, as to concern themſelves in all your Affairs, even in ſuch as relate only to your Perſons, Families, and Diverſions. That, in former Times, the holy Men their Predeceſſors were wont to mix their reverend Spite and Impertinence with their ghoſtly Care, to confound Spirituals with Temporals,

porals, and to dictate in all things, is what I have heard; but was in hopes, that a freer Spirit, with an Increaſe of Liberty and Senſe, had put an End to ſuch Eccleſiaſtical Intruſion, and taught the preſent Set, that as their Miniſtry is known to be bounded by the Bible, and the Civil Conſtitution, they ought to keep themſelves warily within the Limits of their Miniſtry; that if they break the Bounds within which they are placed, and uſurp a Juriſdiction which they have not Force to maintain, People will ſcorn their Fairy Dominion, and they will loſe their Credit, by graſping at Power. The Authority of Nurſes and Pedagogues is confined to Infants and Pupils; it is ſtinted in Time, as well as in Meaſure, and ends where Childhood ends, and where the Years of Diſcretion begin. Should an old Woman take upon her to direct my Youth, becauſe ſhe fed and whipped me, when I was a Babe; or ſhould my Tutor, who taught me to decline Verbs, or to chatter Logic, when I was a Boy, ſeek with his pedantic Talents to controul me, when a Man; I ſhould be apt to think the Nurſe and the Tutor, though perhaps alike wiſe, yet alike unfit for Maſterſhip and Government.

THE Province of our ſpiritual Nurſes is reſtrained to Offices purely ſpiritual. In the Conduct

luct of domeſtic and civil Life, in the Rules f good Senſe and Buſineſs, or even in thoſe of uſt Thinking and Reaſoning; they are generally, f all Men, the moſt unfit to direct or adviſe. eſides their eminent Inexperience; beſides the Narrowneſs of their Spirit, and that their udgment is as defective and aukward, as is their ddreſs and Behaviour; they generally meddle ith the Affairs of other Men from Motives tirely deſpicable and ſelfiſh, from Pride and eeviſhneſs, from Reſentment or Revenge, or r ſome paltry Advantage, for a Fondneſs of ing courted or feared, of being thought wiſe d important, or from ſome other Conſideration worthy of a Man of Senſe, or Honour, or pirit.

It is to no Purpoſe to ſay, that they only m at correcting Vice, and ill Principles. For ey often create Vice, and find it where it is t, in harmleſs Mirth and Amuſement, and in ecreations where not only all Decency and gular Behaviour is obſerved, but where Vice d Impertinence are ridiculed and laſhed, and here Leſſons of Morality and Honour are commended and enforced. And for ill Prinples, what they call ſo, are often no other than rmleſs Speculations and Inquiries after Truth, the Reſult of ſuch Inquiries; often the moſt

noble and beneficent Notions, ſuch as repre-
ſent the Deity uniform, diſpaſſionate, and im-
partial, abhorring human Cruelties, forgiving
human Weakneſſes and Miſtakes, pleaſed with
a ſincere Heart, nor expecting more from his
Creatures than he has given them, and diſengaged
from all little Prejudices in Favour of Sects and
Parties.

THIS creating and multiplying of Sins, and
finding Tranſgreſſions where the Bible finds
none, has what the World calls Policy in it;
becauſe the more Sin abounds, the more neces-
ſary ghoſtly Men are thought; and this Policy
they have improved ſo notably, where they
have been encouraged, or even ſuffered, that
they have turned almoſt every thing into Sin,
except what is the moſt wretched and unman-
of all Sins, that of adoring and obeying Prieſts.
But this Policy is attended with one flagrant In-
convenience: Every Man of Diſcernment
will be apt to ask, If Iniquities are thus increas-
ing, and Men grow daily worſe, in ſpite of
ſuch numerous Monitors, in ſpite of their holy
Counſels, their pious Examples, their awful
and repeated Denunciations; then what avails
an expenſive Army of Prieſts, who own them-
ſelves daily conquered, and utterly unequal to
the adverſe Hoſt? This looks like a Confeſſion

that either *Satan* fears them not, or that they do not all that might be done againſt *Satan*.

In Popiſh Countries there are ſeveral Tranſactions, which appear like palpable Juggles between the Devil and the Friers; particularly in the Buſineſs of Exorciſm, and caſting out evil Spirits: The Devil in Poſſeſſion often holds out a long and inveterate Siege, and when he is at laſt ejected, he is free to enter into the ſame Perſon again, or into ſomebody elſe. If they have indeed Power over the Devil, why do they not caſt him quite out of the World, at leaſt out of the Country? Would we not think, that a General mocked us, if he aſſerted, that he had beaten the Enemies every-where, driven them out of every Town, and every particular Place, but ſtill they were as ſtrong as ever, and ſtill ravaging the Country? I ſhould think, that he and his Troops deſerved to be broken, notwithſtanding his boaſted Skill, and inviſible Feats.

Methinks it is not the deepeſt Craft, for holy Men, armed with ſuch high Powers, to be always appearing in a Fright, and crying for Help from unhallowed Laymen, upon every Phantom of Danger. Againſt the Cauſe of God, we are aſſured by himſelf, that *the Gates of Hell ſhall not prevail*; and to ſuch as main-

tain his Cauſe by his own Aſſiſtance, what Danger is to be apprehended, what human Aſſiſtance can be wanted? The Apoſtles wanted none againſt the whole Pagan World, againſt all the Hoſts of Jewiſh and Pagan Prieſts, breathing Perſecution, and deadly Rage: Yet the Apoſtles had no Eſtabliſhment, no Revenues, no privileged Tribunals to harangue in, no Laws againſt Heretics or Gainſayers, nor even againſt Blaſphemers; and were but a few Men, diſperſed over the World, without Money, without Mobs, and even without Univerſity Education.

AT preſent, and for many Ages paſt, we have had Apoſtolic Men by Thouſands in every Country, and Millions of Money they have coſt almoſt every Country to maintain them. They are protected by Laws ſufficiently indulgent, and without Number. Schools are erected and ſupported at the public Expence for their Education; they themſelves govern theſe Schools, and conduct the National Teaching, both in the Schools, and in the Pulpits. The firſt thing learned by Infants is to reverence them; they catechiſe us when Children, they inſtruct our Youth, and when we are Men, we are not manumitted from their Inſtruction. Young Women are partial to them,

them, Old ones adore them. When we are in Health, we wait upon them for Admonition; and when ſick, receive their Counſel and Diſcipline at home. 'Tis they that exhort, they that rebuke, they that preach to the People, they that pray for them; 'tis they who adminiſter the Seals of the Covenant, work a holy and imperceptible Change in Wine, and Bread, and Water, and they who utter ineffable Myſteries: They bleſs, they curſe; they offer Heaven, they poſſeſs Earth; they denounce Damnation; they cry aloud, they threaten, they terrify: They are Embaſſadors from God; they know his Will; they bear his Authority, they communicate his Intentions, deliver his Commands, diſtribute his Rewards and Terrors, apply his Bleſſings and Judgments: They ſhut the Gates of Paradiſe; they open thoſe of Hell; they admit us into Chriſt's holy Church, they nurture us in it, or exclude us out of it, and are daily appriſing us of their own Power and Importance.

Now what can annoy, what ought to frighten or alarm, Men thus endowed and reverenced; thus adored and exalted; thus dear to Heaven; thus abſolute upon Earth; thus encompaſſed and guarded by Securities Divine and Human, ſo ſignal and many? It is too

great a Compliment to the Powers of Darkneſs, and, in my Opinion, inconſiſtent with Orthodoxy, to ſuppoſe them a Match, much more an Over-match, for the Children of Light; eſpecially for the Envoys and Repreſentatives of the Almighty. This would be introducing a terrible Doctrine amongſt Men; it would be finding a Reaſon and an Apology for the Worſhip paid by the wild *Indians* to the Evil Spirit; who being an Enemy to God, and long ſince vanquiſhed and damned, can never be an Object of Terror to ſound Believers: The Wicked one has no Armour that is Proof againſt a lively Faith, which, as it can remove Mountains, muſt eaſily drive away *Satan*. It is therefore Want of Faith to fear the Devil, whom even Free-thinkers and Unbelievers fear not. It is indeed matter of Lamentation, that Chriſtians, yea, the Directors and Conductors of Chriſtians, ſhould have leſs Courage than Men who are given up to a reprobate Mind; Men left to uncovenanted Mercy, and without Shield or Fence againſt the Aſſaults of the Enemy.

YOU therefore ſurpriſe me, by telling me, as you do, that a Pantomime, a poor Player, *TONY ASHTON*, and his Comedians, have been able to ruffle and diſquiet the Minds of the Re-

Reverend Miniſters of the Kirk. What Tools he brings with him, terrible to the Hierarchy, I cannot conceive. The Laws, the Goſpel, and private Perſons, are protected by the Civil Power: And if *Tony* can hurt and inſult neither Religion, nor *Cæſar*, nor Particulars, how comes he to occaſion ſuch Uproar and Alarms?

DOUBTLESS there are ſeveral Plays too groſs and licentious; and ſo, ſometimes, have been many Sermons: Yet, when a Preacher has abuſed the Privilege of Preaching, advanced wild Opinions, and uttered dangerous and ridiculous Follies, as, upon Occaſions, has happened; it has not been allowed to interrupt or contradict him. Nay, when the Civil Power has queſtioned him for inſulting or calumniating the Civil Adminiſtration; his Brethren have waxed wroth and outrageous, that any of their Body ſhould be queſtioned at any Tribunal but their own: A Right and Impunity, which, I think, are claimed as ſturdily by the Fathers of the Kirk, as by our High-Church, or the High-Church in *Italy*.

BUT as this extravagant Claim implies, that all Rights and Powers whatſoever do directly or indirectly appertain to themſelves, and dooms all Men to a vile and blind Dependence upon the

Clergy in all things; ſo it ſhould warn every Man, who would not blindly tread in the Steps, and hang by the Cloak or the Caſſock, of a Pedagogue, to preſerve an Independence upon the Clergy in all things where the Clergy have nothing to do. Other Commiſſion, than that of Counſelling and Exhorting ſuch as will hear them, I know none that our Bleſſed Saviour has given them; and this he has given to all Men.

WHAT have the Parſons to do with our Recreations and Amuſements? Does the Gaiety and Openneſs of the Spirit, occaſioned by Feſtivity and Diverſion, lead to Sin and Lubricity? Who told them ſo? Upon me it had never any ſuch Effect; and by what Rule do they judge? In my Opinion, the oppoſite Commotions of Spirit, thoſe of Bitterneſs, Ferocity, and Uncharitableneſs, are in themſelves ſinful: odious and unſociable, I am ſure they are, and the genuine Attributes of Monks and Cynics.

WITH Pretences equally juſt, may they claim the Direction of our Perſons, Tables, and Dreſs. The Ladies muſt not wear fine Silks, nor the Men fine Perriwigs, for Fear of exciting Concupiſcence, and alluring one another: Nay, they muſt not wear fine Linen,

nor

nor waſh their Faces, for the like Theological Reaſon. They muſt not enter a Tavern, for fear of being drunk; nor be merry, for fear of being profane; nor eat a good Meal, nor deal in Sauces and Dainties, for fear of pampering the Fleſh.

THERE is no Length to which ſuch impertinent Reaſoning, when it is once admitted, will not go: And, in Effect, we ſee that in every thing which paſſes within the Heart of Man or Woman, or in their Dreſs, Eating, Drinking, and general Oeconomy, the *Romiſh* Prieſts act the Buſy-body, and aſſume to be Comptrollers. Even in the conjugal Pleaſures, thoſe between a Man and his Wife, they aſſert a Right to be informed, and to dictate. They of that Religion know this by Experience; and by reading their Books of *Confeſſion* and *Caſuiſtry*, every one may know it. What, in the Name of Wonder, is it to a Man who deals in Spirituals, whether, when a Woman, in Bed with her Husband, lays her Leg upon his, he is to take it for a Signal, and obey it, though ſhe ſay never a Word? Yet this Query is put by a grave Caſuiſt, and anſwered in the Affirmative; *Imo, certe*, ſays he, *propter Modeſtiam Sexus*. So favourable was the good Doctor to the Ladies!

THIS meddling of theirs in every thing, and meddling like Maſters and Governors, will make People tired and uneaſy to be under their Direction in any thing: So that where they are not armed with the Civil Sword, and the Terrors of an Inquiſition, as, I thank God heartily, they are not like to be with us; they will loſe the Credit which they might otherwiſe preſerve, and grow contemptible, by being troubleſome and impertinent. The Pulpit is their Province, and even that is a Province which they ſhould exerciſe with Modeſty and Warineſs; eſpecially in a Generation like this, when People have learnt to aſſert their natural Liberty, and the Uſe of their Senſes, and to diſpute the Truth of Poſitions which they judge to be doubtful or falſe, however imperiouſly maintained by Men of Reverence and Name.

THAT Authority which depends only or chiefly upon the Eſteem and Opinions of Men, is exceeding precarious, and will decay or periſh, as thoſe Opinions alter, or that Eſteem is loſt, or leſſens. Many have loſt all Credit by carrying it too high, or by maintaining it by falſe and deceitful Supports. What has been the Conſequence of all the wild and unmeaſurable Claims contended for in behalf of Churchmen, by Dr. *HICKES*, Mr. *LESLEY*, and the other Cham-

Champions of that Cauſe? It is true, they were greedily ſwallowed by many of the ſelfiſh and aſpiring Clergy; infatuated many weak Brains amongſt them, and deceived ſeveral of the People, chiefly the Vulgar in Condition of Underſtanding: But their Triumph was ſhort and contemptible. Theſe extravagant Demands for extravagant Power in Eccleſiaſtics, occaſioned a Number of ſuch Anſwers, as have not only ſet the Authority of Churchmen very low in the Opinion of almoſt all Men, and demonſtrated, that from Chriſt they derive no Power or Revenue at all, but, for all that they have, muſt be beholden to Laymen and the Law; but they have likewiſe, by Reaſoning and Examples upon that Subject, ſhewn the Spirit of the Eccleſiaſtics almoſt in all Times, to have been ſo tyrannical, vindictive, and rapacious, that moſt Men are become loth to truſt them with overmuch Wealth or Power, or indeed with any, independent upon the Civil Government.

As the Writings of theſe Divines were viſionary, abſurd, and indeed arrogant, full of Principles deſtructive of Civil Liberty, and all Liberty, oppoſite to the Spirit of the *Reformation*, and contrary to all good Senſe, and all Modeſty; and yet greedily read and approved by Numbers of the inferior Clergy; Men who

had better Senſe and Diſcernment, and wiſhed well to the free Conſtitution of their Country, conceived Indignation at the propagating and encouraging of Notions ſo wild and miſchievous; and have expoſed them ſo effectually, that ſuch Notions, and the Authors of them, are now as much contemned, as they were inſolent and chimerical. Such, in Truth, was the Scheme of theſe Nonjurors, and their Followers; ſo exorbitant and wicked it was, that nothing but blind Popery, ſettled in the Church, and abſolute Tyranny in the State, could have ſupported it: and I think, it is plain, that both theſe Supports were intended to be introduced. Indeed, the Scheme itſelf neceſſarily implied them; and without them, it was a mere Dream.

IT is true, that ſome of theſe high Contenders for unbounded Power in the Church and the Crown, wrote againſt Popery, and ſet Bounds to the Prerogative in Church-Matters. But it is equally true, that they only contended againſt the Popery of the Pope, and againſt owning the Juriſdiction of *Rome*: They, at the ſame time, boldly aſſerted a Power to themſelves equal to that of the Pope; aſſerted all the dreadful, all the ſelfiſh and lucrative, and moſt of the extravagant Poſitions of Popery; ſuch

ſuch as the Right of knowing Hearts by Confeſſion; the Power of Damning and Saving; Prayers for the Dead; Extreme Unction; great and princely Power and Revenues, all holden in their own Right, without depending upon the Civil Power, and even in Spite of it. It I muſt be enſlaved or oppreſſed by an imperious, aſſuming Prieſthood, what is the Difference to me, whether my Oppreſſor live at *Rome*, or *Canterbury*, or *Edinburgh*?

THE Manner alſo in which theſe High-Church Writers treat the Crown, is moſt inſolent, ſhameleſs, and diſhoneſt. They exempt themſelves, and all that is theirs, which is whatever they have a Mind to call ſo, from all Cognizance or Authority of the Civil Power of the Prince. Their Perſons, they ſay, are ſacred, as well as his; nay, more ſacred, and their Poſſeſſions defended by Privileges divine: So that though they ſurrender him the Laity, to be uſed or ſpoiled, fleeced or flayed, as he pleaſes; though they belye the holy Name of God to ſanctify Oppreſſion, to ſecure the Oppreſſor, and to terrify the poor abuſed Sufferers from lifting up their Hand, or even their Voice and Complaints, for Relief; though they call every Attempt to preſerve their Perſons and Property, and to reſiſt inſulting Spoilers, a reſiſting

ſiſting of God, and for it threaten Damnation; yet, if he dare but to touch themſelves, dare to meddle with their Revenues, to enter the Sanctuary, or to claim any Share of their Wealth or Juriſdiction, Heaven and Earth are ſummoned to aſſiſt them, and to reſiſt him; Woes are denounced againſt the faint Heart, and feeble Hand; and the Croſier is reared againſt the Sceptre.

Is not ſuch impudent Conduct enough to open the Eyes of all Men, even of the moſt ſtupid, bigotted, and blind? To ſee Religion turned into a manifeſt Market of Power and Wealth; the great God made the Voucher of an execrable Bargain between the Oppreſſors of Men in their Perſons, and the Oppreſſors of Men in their Conſciences; to ſee Men tied up or let looſe, made tame or furious, crouching under unrelenting Tyranny, or armed againſt legal Power, juſt as they are directed, ſcared, or inflamed by Prieſts! To ſee theſe Prieſts claiming to themſelves all ſorts of Privileges, and Wealth and Power without Bounds; to ſee them aſſuming Principalities and Power, by virtue of Succeſſorſhip to the poor, wandering, and perſecuted Apoſtles; and yet denying the abuſed Laity, from whom they have all things, to have a Right

to

to any thing, not even to their Property, and their Senſes! Will ſuch Clergymen, after this, complain that ſuch Clergymen are not reverenced? Men, who by their extravagant and ſelfiſh Poſitions, diſcover a Spirit ſo unchriſtian and unſociable; ſuch a one as undermines all the Rights and Pleaſure of human Society, and of human Life. They are, indeed, contemned; and upon themſelves they have drawn that Contempt. Will they complain of the Growth of Infidelity and Profaneneſs, when, by their Example and Principles, they had ſhewn, that they meant to debaſe Religion as far as it could be debaſed, by turning it into an Engine for Dominion and Opulence; and perverted the Goſpel into a Scheme of Grandeur, Abſurdities, and Perſecution? What has propagated Infidelity ſo much as their own ſelfiſh Tenets and Conduct, and the vile Uſe which they made of the Bible; as if it had been nothing elſe but a Patent to exalt Prieſts, and enſlave the Laity? Of all the Latitudinarian Books in the World, the Writings of High-Church Men are the moſt fraught with miſchievous and horrible Poſitions.

I WISH, for the Honour of the whole Body of the Clergy, that the Convocation had at any time branded ſuch infamous and peſtilent Do-

Doctrines, by ſome juſt and public Cenſure, ſuch as they have been very free to beſtow upon Books and Propoſitions which defended the common Rights of Conſcience and Society. By their utter Silence in this Matter, they have miniſtered a Handle to ſome for ſuſpecting, (I hope, unjuſtly) that, to Aſſemblies of Clergymen, the Happineſs of the Laity was of little Concernment, and Liberty of Conſcience a Matter of Offence: That they had Views irreconcileable to the *Reformation*, and the Eſtabliſhment, and were purſuing an Intereſt oppoſite to that of the Public. What heightened this Suſpicion, was the manifeſt Partiality of their Conduct: While they were aſſiduouſly ſearching after Books which defended the Civil Rights of Society, and the unalienable Right of all Men to think for themſelves, in order to cenſure them; and in doing it, did notoriouſly miſrepreſent them; they thought fit to paſs over Books which aſſerted the blackeſt of all Iniquities, that of Perſecution; Books which reviled the Conſtitution, ſtruck at the Root of public Liberty, contended for public Servitude, (in the Laity only) and boldly revived and maintained the moſt dangerous and impudent Opinions of Popery. And when ſuch impious Writings were laid before them, their

their Boldneſs and peſtilent Tendency ſhewn, and Paſſages quoted out of them, ſhocking to the Ears of Freemen and Proteſtants; ſtill that Reverend Body perſiſted to make no Animadverſions.

WHAT Concluſion, advantageous to their Reputation, could be drawn from a Proceeding ſo evidently unequitable and unjuſt, when a Set of Men, aſſuming to be Judges, were apparently Parties, and had ſo little Regard, or rather ſo much Averſion, to righteous Judgment, that upon Truths the moſt obvious, upon Principles the moſt benevolent, their Wrath and Anathemas fell; while the moſt daring Arraignment of private Conſcience, and the moſt bare-faced Inſults upon public Liberty, Civil and Chriſtian, incurred no Blame? In one, for Example, it was a heinous Crime, and loudly cenſured, to have ſaid, "That "our Saviour's Kingdom was not of this "World;" though after our Saviour himſelf he ſaid it. But it proved to the Convocation no Matter of Offence, for another to have impiouſly maintained, that "Heaven itſelf "waited for the Sentence from the Prieſt's "Mouth, and God himſelf followed the "Judgment of the Prieſt" —— That "Kings "and Queens are to bow down before the "Prieſt,

" Prieſt, with their Faces towards the Earth, " and to lick up the Duſt of his Feet;" with many other miſchievous and unhallowed Extravagancies, to the Diſgrace of Religion, and common Senſe. Was this the Way to be reverenced, to utter as the Oracles of God, ſuch impudent and poiſonous Falſhoods, or to defend them, or not to ſtigmatize them: Was it not rather a way to forfeit all common Reſpect, and to incur univerſal Indignation and Scorn?

A FAMILY is a ſmall State, as a State is a great Family. Now, ſuppoſe the Maſter or Prince of a Family take into his Service a Chaplain, and give him Bread and Wages; Does this ſame Chaplain take a Method to be reverenced or believed, if he tell the Man who maintains him? " I am your ſpiritual Prince; " you are my ſpiritual Subject; I can abſolve " or damn you: You muſt tell me all the Se- " crets of your Heart, let me judge of your " Thoughts; ſubmit without Murmuring or " Heſitation to my Dictates and Cenſure, and " be obedient to my Diſcipline. You muſt " call me your Chaplain in no other Senſe " than you ſay, *my Lord*, and *my God*. You " ought to fall down before me, and lick up " the Duſt of my Feet. My Government in " your

" your Family, as a Prieſt, is farther above
" yours, as you are a Layman, than Heaven is
" above the Earth; and my Revenue ought
" to be greater than yours, though you are a
" Prince in your Houſe.

" AND to make you Amends for thus ſhare-
" ing with you in your Power and Riches, I
" do hereby, in the Name of Heaven, doom
" all your Children and Servants, that is, all
" your Lay-Domeſtics, to be your Slaves,
" without Reſerve; and I do aſſert your Au-
" thority over them, be it ever ſo cruel, un-
" natural and deſtructive, to be the Ordinance
" of God; and you to be his Vicegerent, how-
" ever wicked and unlike God you prove.
" But my Perſon and Property you muſt not
" touch; for I am a ſacred Perſon; in all
" the Money and Power which I take from
" you, I am independent and unaccountable;
" for I am the Lord's Prieſt, and my Wealth
" is God's Wealth. It would be Sacrilege in
" you to meddle with either: If you do, you
" will be damned. And if I can perſuade
" your Lady, or your Son, to give me any
" Lands or Treaſure, for the Good of their
" Souls, whatever Artifices I uſe to draw ſuch
" Donations from them, you muſt protect me
" in the Poſſeſſion, againſt your Grandchildren,

" or

" or any other Claimant whatſoever: For, to " take it from me, or from any future Chap- " lain for ever, would be to rob God and the " Church.

" MOREOVER, if any of your Family, " your Lady, Children, or Servants, ſhould " preſume to differ in Opinion from me, and " follow their own Conſcience, this is Schiſm, " it is a damnable Sin; for out of the Church, " that is, without my Permiſſion and Manage- " ment, there is no Salvation: And ſuch Schiſ- " matics, Heretics, and Gainſayers, you muſt " proſecute, that is, fine, impriſon, whip, hang, " or burn, as I ſhall direct you: If you do not, " you favour Heretics and Schiſmatics, and " I will excommunicate you, that is, deliver " you to the Devil; and then you are un- " worthy of any Authority, and I will excite " your Family to turn you out of your Houſe, " unleſs by Submiſſion to me you ſhew yourſelf " penitent, and worthy to be reſtored: Upon " this Condition I will recall you, and turn " off the Perſon that I put in your Room, " whom I will call an Uſurper, if he do not " humour me in all things. For, 'tis I who " can preſerve Obedience, or ſtir up Strife and " Fighting in your Family, and teach them " the Neceſſity of obeying or reſiſting, by the

" Ter-

" Terrors of Divine Vengeance, which is al-
" ways armed when I am angry, and aſleep
" when I am pleaſed."

Now, would Pretences and Claims, thus impious and ſhameleſs, be borne from any particular Chaplain, by his particular Lord or Patron? And yet are not ſuch Claims aſſerted by the High Clergy in general? And do they not affect every individual Layman, by affecting the whole Body of the Laity? They treat us to our Faces, like Vaſſals blind and tame, and doom us without Ceremony, to bear Invaſion and Tyranny with meek Hearts, and Hands bound. All that we have, is hardly enough for them. Yet were we to treat them as they treat one another, a very ſmall Competency would appear a ſufficient Appointment and Maintenance for the Succeſſors of the Apoſtles. Do we not frequently ſee a Reverend Doctor poſſeſs Three, Five, nay Eight hundred Pounds a Year, ſometimes more than a Thouſand; and yet out of this great Revenue, which he thinks not too much, and hardly enough, though he do nothing for it, give no more than Fifteen, Twenty, Thirty, or at moſt Forty Pounds a Year to a Curate, for doing the whole Duty of the Pariſh? If this be enough for the Labour of a Clergyman, why do the Laity give any-where more?

more? If it be not, why does the rich Doctor give ſo little? The Curate is furniſhed with all neceſſary Abilities and Qualifications as well as the Doctor, and has the ſame ſpiritual Powers, to baptize, to give Abſolution and the Communion, to marry, preach, pray, bury, viſit the Sick, and to take Tithes, if he had any to take.

THUS, in the Opinion of former Biſhops, (Governors of the Church) who often kept Curates themſelves, when they ſtill retained a good fat Living *in Commendam*; and thus in the common Practice of the inferior Clergy; Wages ſometimes not much higher than thoſe of a Carter, ſcarce ever ſo high as thoſe of an Exciſeman, are ſufficient for doing all the Functions of a Clergyman. Would this not ſeem a Rule to the Laity, a Rule taken from the beſt Authority in the World, that of the Practice of the Clergy, how to rate the Work and Worth of a Clergyman? Why ſhould they expect, that Laymen ſhould value the Labour and Uſe of a Clergyman higher, than the Clergy themſelves do in Fact value it? They will not ſay, That Three, or Five, or Eight, or Ten Hundreds a Year, is little enough for the Sagacity of chuſing, and the Trouble of hiring, a Curate for Twenty, or Thirty, or Forty; though ſome-

time

times things equally fooliſh and abſurd are ſaid; for there are many Laymen who can drive a hard Bargain, and pinch their Workmen, and we too often find the Reverend Deputy of a great Doctor full as bad and inſufficient, as if the Church-wardens had picked him up, and hired him. I would therefore be glad to know why any Man, why eſpecially a Miniſter of the Goſpel, who ſhould labour in Seaſon, and out of Seaſon, ſhould have any Revenue, eſpecially a great Revenue, for nothing?

BUT I ramble from my firſt Deſign, though perhaps, had I purſued it, I ſhould not have tired you leſs. But I am like other Authors, who, whilſt they pleaſe themſelves, think that they are furniſhing Delight to their Reader. To your Information I pretend not to add any thing, not even in telling you, that I am, with great Affection and Sincerity,

SIR,

Your Faithful Servant,

M. S.

JOHANNIS TRENCHARD, Armigeri.

QUI, quamvis antiqua ſtirpe ortus, multiſque opibus florens,
Neque domo, neque pecunia, præcipuam ſibi laudem
Aſſecutus eſt.
Quam alii claritudine generis,
(Majoribus innixi)
Quam alii divitiis
Gloriam oſtentant fortuitam & inanem,
Ille virtute ingenioque
Sinceram, propriamque, & manſuram ſibi comparavit:
Solertia & morum ſanctitate, imaginibus domus,
Præluxit.
Vim animi, integritatem vitæ, in patriam ſuoſque caritatem
Pauci æquârunt; anteceſſere nulli.
Pueritia vix egreſſus, Foro vacavit,
Legum peritus, cauſiſque orandis validus:
Sed jurgiis Forenſibus atque lucro ſtatim valedicens,
Seceſſum dilexit, vitamque privatam.
Reip. tamen curam, nunquam ſibi neglectam,
Neque

A Monument *Sacred to the Memory of* JOHN TRENCHARD, *Esq*;

A Gentleman deſcended from an antient Family,
And conſpicuous for abundant Wealth:
Yet neither from his Race, nor his Fortune,
Did he derive his principal Renown.
Some boaſt a Glory derived from the Luſtre of their Lineage;
And rely upon the Merits of their Anceſtors:
Others vaunt the Glory of their Wealth.
Vain and accidental is all ſuch Glory.
His was of his own acquiring, without Allay,
Perſonal and permanent,
The pure Reſult of his Virtue and Parts.
In his native Accompliſhments, and in the Sanctimony of his Morals,
He gained Splendor ſurpaſſing that of his Houſe.
In Vigour of Spirit, in Integrity of Life,
In Tenderneſs to his Country, to his Kindred and Friends,
Few ever equalled him,
None ever ſurpaſſed him.
Whilſt yet a Youth, he attended the Bar,
Learned in the Laws, and a powerful Pleader.
But ſoon abandoning the Strife of Suits,
And the Purſuit of Gain,

Neque depoſuit, nec fruſtra exercuit;
Dominationis cujuſvis generis hoſtis perpetuus,
Et vere timendus;
Libertatis, priſcique moris,
Cuſtos rigidus, Vindex acer.
Simul naturæ humanæ, pravitatis hominum,
Ambituſque & calliditatis Potentium,
Gnarus, ac probe ſuſpicax,
Prætextus eorum a conſultis, a domino Magiſtratum,
Diſcriminare valuit;
Vimque et ſuperbiam, quandocunque laceſſerant,
Summa facundia increpare auſus eſt.
Miſſionem exercitus
Poſt finem belli Gallici, GULIELMO Principe,
Oratione ſcripta, adhuc Juvenis
Efflagitavit atque obtinuit,
Invitis Aulicis & frementibus.
Par ipſe ſummis negotiis,
Et honores meritus, ſed aſpernatus,
Artibus privati præcelluit.
Myſtarum Rabiem,
Triſtes Fanaticorum ineptias,
Libertati civium atque bonis inhiantium,
Semper averſatus;
Petulantiam iſtorum & aviditatem
Ac iter redarguit & coercuit:
Nec Deum Opt. Max.
Truculentiæ effræni, vel vociferatui inani annuere,
Aut lapſu & erroribus mentis offendi
Ratus eſt.

Anno

He preferr'd Retirement, and a private Life.
His Concern however for the Public
(A Concern ever inseparable from his Thoughts)
He neither renounced, nor exercised in vain;
Of Encroachments and Domination of every kind
A constant and a formidable Foe;
Of public Liberty, and primitive Institutions,
A rigid Assertor, a powerful Champion.
From Observation he knew, from a just Principle he suspected,
The Frailty of human Nature, and the Pravity of Men,
With the Ambition and Artifices of Men in Power:
Between their avowed Pretences, and real Pursuits,
He could well distinguish,
As between the worthy Magistrate, and the lawless Ruler;
Ever resolute to encounter every public Violence,
And all the Insolence of Power,
With consummate Eloquence.
The Disbanding the Army after the *French* War,
In the Reign of King WILLIAM,
By an Argument written and published,
Even in his Youth he undertook to procure,
Urged it with great Force,
And even succeeded,
In Opposition to the Efforts and Rage of the Courtiers.
To the highest Affairs his Abilities were equal:
But deserving public Honours,
And despising them,

Annos V. poſt L. vixit, ſibi ſatis;
At non Patriæ, non amicis, nec uxori.
Cæterum, ut ſine labe vitam tranſegerat,
Mortem abſque formidine obiit,
Liberis viris & bonis nunquam non deſiderandus;
Decemb. XVI. An. Ch. MDCCXXIII.
Manent Monumenta ingenii, ſemperque manebunt,
Scriptis multi generis ſacrata.

He ſhone in the Accompliſhments of private Life.
To the wild Fury of all Viſionaries and Myſtiſts,
To the direful Fooleries of all Bigots,
His Enmity was bent and perpetual,
As Men ever ravening againſt the Liberty, againſt the Poſſeſſions,
Of their Fellow-Citizens.
Eloquently he expoſed, zealouſly he reſtrained,
The petulant Spirit and Avarice of ſuch Men.
That the God of Nature, ſupremely Great, ſupremely Good,
Could ever approve wanton Cruelty, or devout Clamour, and empty Sounds,
Or could ever be offended with the Miſtakes and Roamings of the human Soul,
Was what his rational Heart could never conceive.
To the Age of almoſt Fifty-five he lived,
An Age to himſelf ſufficiently long;
But not ſo to his Country, nor to his Friends, nor to his Lady.
As he had paſſed his Life without Blemiſh,
He encountered Death without Fear,
A Man by all virtuous Men and Free-men
Worthy to be for ever lamented.
He died on the Sixteenth of *December* 1723.
Of his Genius and Abilities there are Monuments remaining,
Such as will for ever remain,
Conſecrated to Time and Poſterity in Writings of various Kinds.

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